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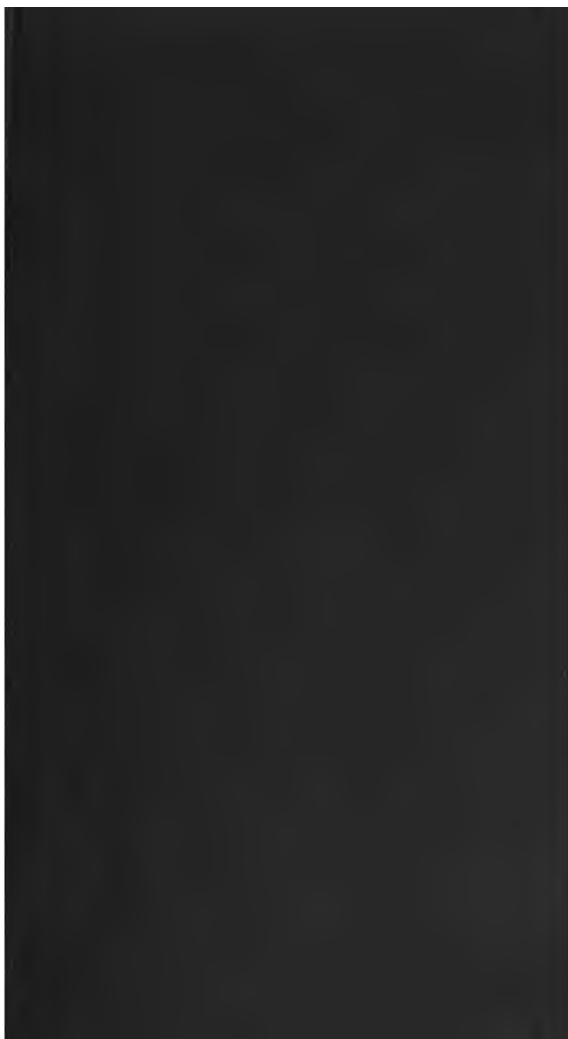
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CHRISTIAN TRUTH

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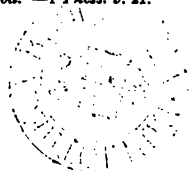
PLYMOUTHISM.

BY THE

REV. PETER MEARNs,

COLDSTREAM.

"Prove all things : hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21.



EDINBURGH:

WILLIAM OLIPHANT & COMPANY.

1874.

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P R E F A C E.

THE present volume owes its origin to the efforts of Plymouth Brethren to spread their principles in Northumberland and Berwickshire. In my visits among my people I have occasionally met with inquiries respecting the views held by the Brethren. This led me to inquire why the information was needed; and I found that individuals were active in spreading the principles of the Brethren in this neighbourhood. Besides answering the inquires in private, I delivered two discourses from the pulpit, as a public answer to all who might desire the information, whether they had applied to me for it or not. As I regard the Brethren as the teachers of error, I wished to place my people on their guard against this error, especially as it was contemplated to hold a series of evangelistic meetings in the church of which I am pastor. Such meetings are usually taken advantage of by the Brethren for the purpose of propagating their principles simultaneously.

I afterwards prepared a series of articles on the subject, which appeared in the *United Presbyterian Magazine*; and I would have deemed the large circulation thus obtained quite



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PLYMOUTHISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN OF PLYMOUTHISM.

AT the beginning of the present century the name "Plymouth Brethren" was unknown, the sect to which it is applied having at that time no existence. It is therefore one of the youngest of all sects, but its pretensions are as lofty as if it could trace an unbroken succession from the days of the apostles downwards. Its progress has been remarkable for so recent an origin. It is widely spread over the three kingdoms, the colonies, the continent of Europe, and the United States of North America. Our churches, and especially our ministers, require to know something of the doctrines and doings of this sect, for they are continually making inroads on our congregations, with such skilful secrecy, that their proselytizing zeal has often made consider-

able progress ere even the watchful pastor is aware of their presence. When their presence is ascertained, the pastor finds it necessary to know something more of their tenets and intentions than they are themselves willing to reveal.

The question has often been proposed to me recently, "What are the views of divine truth held by the people usually called Plymouth Brethren?" I find that the general conception of them is, that they are serious and well-meaning people, but that they are very revolutionary in their views of church order. I have known something of their principles and practices for more than twenty years, and I have met occasionally with individual "Brethren" during that period, but until recently I did not deem it necessary or desirable to direct public attention to their views and practices. I find, however, that they thrive best when let alone; and it is due to the young and inexperienced that we should utter a note of warning. It is reasonable that we should inquire, "Ought we to bid them 'God speed,' and to regard them as Christian brethren to us, as they profess to be to one another?" They "speak the language of Canaan,"

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nomination as brethren; while *we*, on
hand, speak with propriety of our
brethren of all denominations. Th
have everything loose and indefinite in
they present to the uninitiated

children of God."* We have here a good specimen of Darbyite assumption. Dr. Wolston claims for his party that they are the Lord's brethren, and, by necessary inference, brethren to each other by a common relation to the one Lord. But connection with Christ counts for nothing with him unless the individual be also a follower of Darby. The Darbyite quietly assumes that Christ is not ashamed to call His party brethren, and that he would be thoroughly ashamed to apply the name to any one else. The party claim to be perfect, and we may concede the claim so far as to admit that they have reached perfection in assumption and uncharitableness. If their own chosen name of "Brethren" is conceded, though not in their exclusive sense, along with the distinctive epithet "Plymouth," they have no reason to find fault. Mr. Groves, with whom the party originated, began public life in Plymouth; and though the meetings of the brethren began at Dublin, when Mr. Groves was attending the University there, the church at Plymouth soon became so numerous and influen-

* See the Rev. R. H. Ireland's interesting pamphlet on the *Principles and Practices of "Brethren,"* p. 10.

tial that the new sect was named from that town. It cannot be said to be a name of reproach, for, in a moral point of view, Plymouth is neither better nor worse than other towns. The name "Darbyites" is needed to distinguish the prevailing section, but "Dublin Brethren" would answer equally well. The party have no good reason to object to be named after their leader, who is owned as a pope among them. The Darbyite section is most widely known by the generic name "Plymouthists;" they are now the chief representatives of the party. The exclusive claim of a name "common to all the children of God" is one which it is offensive for them to make, and which it would be wrong for us to concede. The High Church party claims that the Church of England alone is the true church, while the Pope declares that his is the only true church on earth, and both represent a large number of adherents; but for a small sect, which had no existence half a century ago, to assert that they alone are the children of God, is more absurd than if three men in London were to declare themselves the whole people of England. The Plymouthists say that they are no "sect;"



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Mr. Newton's influence paramount there. Regardless of the unity of the body, of which he had boasted, and in the face of the command "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," Mr. Darby endeavoured to effect a division among the saints with whom he had been in fellowship from the commencement. Having partially succeeded, "he spread a table elsewhere on the last Sunday of that eventful year, which was in future to be exclusively the table of the Lord, around which himself and followers were to rally. From this meeting we must date the rise of Darbyism, and its development into a distinct and self-excommunicated body, separated on grounds subversive of the great truth around which, as opposed to all sectarianism, "the Brethren" had sought to rally the saints of God, namely, that the blood of the Lamb was the basis of the union of the family of heaven."* It

* *Darbyism: its Rise and Development; and a Review of "the Bethesda Question."* By Henry Groves, p. 15. This large pamphlet contains a record of facts that needs to be known by all who wish to understand the true character of Plymouthism. It is all the more authoritative that it was read to Messrs. Craik, Müller, and others previous to publication, and its correctness was attested. Mr. H. Groves might say of the events he records, "*Quorum pars magna fui.*"

is not a little remarkable that the principle on which the union of "the Brethren" was originally founded is now abandoned by the leading sect. The principle was taken from Rev. vii. 14, and was thus expressed:—"The basis of our union in glory is quite sufficient for our union on earth." "*The blood of the Lamb—the union of saints,*" became the watchword and the rallying point of a party which was meant to embrace the whole household of God. But Darby and his followers now hold that the death of Christ is not atoning, as I have shown by quoting the words of the "Brethren" in the fifth section of Chap. III.

As every man must have a name, to distinguish him from other men, so must every society, to distinguish it from other societies. We adhere, for the reasons given, to the name "Plymouth Brethren," till a better is suggested. The sect originated in connection with Plymouth; and as they have chosen the name "Brethren," there is surely nothing offensive in prefixing, by way of distinction, the place whence they sprang. If we speak distinctively of the sections of the brotherhood, we must use the names, Darbyites,

merites, etc.; but the sections are each other, that they can hardly be said to be kindred now.

The pious and benevolent Mr. Anthony Groves, who went out as a missionary to India, was no doubt the originator of the Plymouth Brethren—a sect which he was early opposed. Mr. Groves left Plymouth for England soon passed beyond his control, adopting and following practices to which he was opposed. Mr. Groves left Plymouth for England where he began to practice as a dentist in 1825. He was originally a member of the Established Church, and he attended the University of Dublin with a view to becoming a barrister preparatory to the study of law.

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out the promise of support from any society. But he left warm friends behind him, on whose sympathy and prayers he could reasonably count. When in Dublin, he was in the habit of meeting with a few brethren, and at his suggestion they broke bread together. When he left for Persia in 1829, Mr. Darby became leader of the "Brethren;" and a similar meeting was begun at Plymouth, under the charge of Mr. Newton. It was not meant at first that they should separate themselves from the church to which they belonged. Mr. Groves wished to associate freely with Christian brethren of all denominations, at home or in the foreign mission field. He took with him, as tutor to his two boys (Henry and Frank,) John Kitto, who afterwards became a distinguished Biblical scholar. He believed that miracles are still to be expected in the Church in answer to prayer; but when his wife died of the plague in Bagdad, contrary to all his expectations, he was led somewhat to modify his views on that point.

Dr. Kitto left Persia for England in 1831, accompanied by Mr. F. W. Newman, now Professor Newman, of University College, London.

who has since renounced the faith he then seemed to hold so ardently. The Professor has sunk lower than most infidels, who generally profess great respect for the character of Jesus Christ, whatever they may say of Christians; but the former member of the missionary staff at Bagdad has sunk to the awful depth of impeaching the life and honesty of our blessed Saviour. Mr. Groves relates in his journal, that when Mr. Newman was sick, and "at the worst, and they had given up all hopes of him, they anointed him with oil, according to James v. 14, and prayed over him; and the Lord had mercy on them, yea, and on me also, and restored him. It seems to me truly scriptural."* Mr. Groves lived to see his friend, thus marvellously restored, depart from the faith, and he had reason to cry, "Alas! my brother!" When men profess too much, and are hurried on to extremes beyond the control of a sober judgment, they are in great danger of a recoil, which may sweep them down into the depths of infidelity or atheism.

The news which Mr. Groves heard from time to time of the state of religious feeling among

* *Eadie's Life of Kitto*, p. 164.

his friends in England was not altogether satisfactory. When he returned to England in 1835, he was grieved to find that his beloved brethren, whose meetings had been so pleasant to him six years before, were becoming bitter sectarians. In Plymouth he found little comfort,* “feeling that their original bond of union in the truth as it is in Jesus had been *changed* for a united testimony against all who differed from them.” Even then the spirit of party was at work, and when Dublin began to be recognised as their headquarters, the party became Ishmaelites in Israel—their hand against every man, and every man’s hand against them. Before leaving England for India, in 1836, Mr. Groves wrote thus sadly to Mr. Darby:—“I feel that you are in principle returning to the city from whence you departed, and it needs but a step or two more to advance, and you will see all the evils of the systems from which you profess to be separated to spring up among yourselves. . . . You will be known more by what you witness *against* than what you witness for, and practically this will prove that you witness against all but your-

* See *Memoir of A. N. Groves*, by his Widow, p. 343.

selves as certainly as the Walkerites or Glassites ; your shibboleth may be different, but it will be as *real*. . . . The transition your little bodies have undergone, in no longer standing forth the witnesses for the glorious and simple *truth* so much as standing forth witnesses against all that they judge error, have lowered them, in my apprehension, from heaven to earth in their position of witnesses. . . . And the position which this occupying the seat of judgment will place you in will be this: the most narrow-minded and bigoted will rule, because his conscience cannot and will not give way, and therefore the more enlarged must yield. It is into this position, dear Darby, I feel some little flocks are fast tending, if they have not already attained it.”* The predictions of Mr. Groves have been fulfilled, and it is said that there are now thirty distinct sects in this distracted body. Instead of being the most united, it is the most divided of all sects.

Dr. Kitto met his dear friend for the last time in 1835, when Mr. Groves was about to sail for India; but he cherished throughout life the

* *Memoir*, Appendix G.

warmest affection for Mr. Groves, from whom he had received much spiritual benefit. In a letter to a friend, the Biblical scholar said of the devoted missionary to whom he owed so much :—
“I confess to you that there are many of his views in which I do not concur nearly so much as I seemed to myself to do, while I was under that strong personal influence which I think he exerts over those who are in near connection with him, through the warmth and energy which, more than any other man I ever knew, he throws into his opinions.”* It is not meant that there was anything radically wrong in the religious views of Mr. Groves. He was thoroughly sound on the fundamental doctrines of our holy faith. In reading his delightful *Memoir*, points of difference appear only like spots on the sun—hardly visible, on account of the surrounding brightness. He and his brother-in-law, Mr. Müller, of Bristol, are further removed from the present race of Plymouthists than they are from Christians of other denominations. Elsewhere, Kitto calls his friend “a Bible Christian, and a disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus; not nomi-

* Ryland's *Life of Kitto*, p. 545.

nally, but practically and really such.* The late Mr. Craik was in the habit of preaching for all the ministers in Bristol, and he was on the most friendly terms with all the Churches. Had Mr. Groves remained in this country, this singularly devoted and warm-hearted man might possibly have guided the "Brethren" more wisely than their other leaders have done; but he remained in India till failing health compelled him to return to his native country in 1852. He repaired to Bristol on his return to England, where he was surrounded by relatives and friends, who loved him with extraordinary ardour. He spoke "of the joy he had as before at Bethesda and Salem Chapels, where he was strengthened to minister on several occasions, with much profit to others and blessing to himself." After preaching in various places, and visiting many friends, he went to Malvern in search of health; but when Dr. Gully told him there was no hope of improvement, he calmly said: "So I go to my own dear Bristol." He had barely strength for the journey; and after a few days of holy, heavenly fellowship with friends on earth, he

* Ryland's *Life of Kitto*, p. 148.

was called into the immediate presence of the Saviour he loved so fervently and served so faithfully. His last words were, "Precious Jesus!"

If all Plymouthists were like Mr. Groves and his brother-in-law, Mr. Müller, of Bristol, the other denominations would have nothing to complain of. But the party that now claim the name, and are pushing themselves forward everywhere, are bitterly sectarian in their spirit and heretical in their principles. It is clearly the duty of the Church to warn the young and unsuspecting against their insidious influence. In a report on the state of religion, presented by a committee to the General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church in June last year, several references are made to disturbances excited during the past year in various congregations by the Plymouth Brethren. The committee state that a session in the Synod of London report:—"We are so impressed with a conviction of the formidable character of the danger that threatens our Church from this quarter, that we cannot help feeling and expressing a strong desire that the supreme court of our Church

would appoint a committee to draw up in pamphlet form, and put in general circulation throughout our congregations, an exposure of the doctrinal errors of the Plymouth Brethren. This would be a great benefit to our people, and, we are satisfied, of no little service to many of our ministers, who otherwise may have to contend with these false teachers at a great disadvantage."



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to embitter party feelings, as each new sect is tempted to employ disreputable means to increase its numbers at the expense of its neighbours—the evil being most felt where there were previously too many churches for the people inclined to attend them. But there is an obvious reason for the introduction of a new denomination where there are people belonging to it in the locality, wishing to have the opportunity of worshipping in connection with the church to which they belong ; and, if they succeed in adding to their numbers by bringing in some who previously attended no place of worship, all right-thinking persons will rejoice in such success. Many new labourers have been publicly welcomed to various localities in this way, and they have acted honourably towards brethren previously in the field. But such a course is altogether different from that followed by the Plymouth Brethren. They consider that their mission is to plunder the other churches. They do not go to the home heathen for recruits, but to the churches around them. Their practice acts with all the uniformity of a law, and is found in operation wherever they have obtained a footing. This is

attested everywhere by those who have had an opportunity of observing their doings ; and ample testimony is borne to the uniformity of this practice by those who once belonged to them, but subsequently saw good reason to withdraw from them. When they succeed in drawing an individual to their meetings, they insist on his breaking off all connection with the church to which he formerly belonged. In this way they have succeeded in breaking the peace of churches, and in alienating affectionate wives from their husbands, and affectionate daughters from their parents. In some cases husbands have been silly enough to yield to the persevering urgency of a wife, for the sake of domestic peace, though conscientiously opposed to separation from a church in which he and his fathers had long worshipped. Even the mighty Samson yielded to Delilah, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death. Many pious young people have been so perverted by these peace-breaking Brethrenites as to refuse to attend family worship conducted by a devout father whom they previously revered and loved ; but, in other

cases, filial affection has proved too strong to allow full play to the Darbyite doctrine. Our Saviour declares that the peacemaker is blessed; but a different portion will fall to the peace-breaker. "The Brethren" have become a pest to the Church—an unseemly ulcer on the body ecclesiastic. It is no wonder that they try to conceal their name when prowling about sheep-folds with all the cunning of greedy wolves; for their nefarious deeds have given them a bad repute. In former days the husbandman on the Border required to watch his fields in the season of harvest, lest the whole produce of the year should be carried off by neighbours crossing the Tweed; but, when these unprincipled invaders were caught, their pilfering propensities were summarily brought to a termination. So must the pilfering fraternity, in quest of church members, be carefully watched, and their name demanded wherever they appear, with a full statement of their opinions and aims. People, like Plymouthists, who believe that the moral law is abrogated so far as they are concerned, are dangerous neighbours. It is full time that these troublers of Israel were detected, exposed, and

expelled. They have too long been permitted to impose on simple-minded people, whose goodness prevents them from suspecting ulterior designs. "They creep into houses, and lead captive silly women." Eve, the mother of all living, was overcome by temptation in her husband's absence; and then she became the instrument of effecting her husband's fall. This very ancient plan of the tempter is still followed. Idle persons become busy in mischief; and I have known idle "Brethren" searching out benevolent and pious ladies, who are supposed to be susceptible of impression; and, when their husbands were absent at business, the poison of error was instilled into the unsuspecting mind. In some cases the deadly work required many visits, during which secrecy was enjoined on servants. It is well when the husband's suspicions are aroused in time to defeat the plans of these sappers and miners. Not unfrequently is suspicion awakened by seeing a little book, either anonymous, or with only initials on the title-page, inadvertently left by the reader on the table. I have had many such books sent me. At first I did not suspect their error, as they

contain many things good and true; but they are pervaded by views of Christian truth so crude, and unsatisfactory, and unscriptural, that I cannot advise any one to read them, except for purposes of controversy. Those who feel called on to refute their errors, ought to ascertain them accurately from their own books. The fact that the authors are unwilling to prefix their names is, in itself, suspicious. It is part of their cunning tactics. The reader will have no difficulty, however, in afterwards ascertaining who is the author. The learned and candid Dr. Tregelles, who was himself a Plymouthist ere the sect had embraced the errors by which they are now distinguished, laments the "Romeward doctrines, veiled in apparent spirituality," which pervade their tracts and little books. He says, "Much ingenuity is shown in the manner in which Brethrenite doctrines on these subjects are circulated. They are often found in tracts which are so mingled, and circulated with other and better publications, that the good cause the bad to be received without suspicion. Some of the tracts are plain enough as to doctrine: in some there is a veil of specious spirituality



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told that it had been done 'for the honour of God.'"*

The testimony of Dr. Tregelles is important, as he is well acquainted with the Plymouthist publications, and well qualified to judge of the doctrines contained in them. Similar remarks might be made regarding the treatment of hymns by the Plymouthists. The progress of error among them rendered their hymns altogether unsuitable. To quote the words of Dr. Tregelles—"In hymns, the Brethren soon found themselves using the very language which they were condemning as heresy. Alterations were introduced in consequence. When Watts said, 'Arrayed in *mortal* flesh,' in one hymn, and 'entered the grave in *mortal* flesh,' in another, the word human was substituted; and so on in other cases. The hymn-books of the Brethren, since 1847, might show, even to themselves, that they had adopted a new and unsound doctrine. A hymn written by one of the Brethren, Mr. J. G. Deck, beginning—

'Lord Jesus, are we one with Thee?'

* *Christ the End of the Law for Righteousness: Five Letters*, by S. P. Tregelles, LL.D., pp. 28-29.

contained the following verse :—

‘Such was Thy grace, that for our sake,
Thou didst from heaven come down,
Our *mortal* flesh and blood partake,
In all our misery one.’

But this was now changed by the author, after it had been so used for years as to have become a public document. The orthodox word ‘mortal’ has become a kind of key-note.”* The Plymouthists object to the word “mortal” as applied to our Saviour on account of their false doctrine of the “heavenly humanity,” to which we shall have occasion afterwards to refer. When it is known that they object to confession of sin, it is at once apparent that they must materially modify or entirely exclude many hymns habitually used by sound Christians.

It is not pleasant to suspect any class of professing Christians of pretending to be what they are not. But our Saviour sternly rebuked the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees of His day, knowing that hypocrisy is more hurtful to religion than the opposition of avowed enemies. Experience has revealed to us the superabundance

* *Five Letters*, pp. 23-24.

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Mr. Darby was wont to write lovingly from Dublin to Mr. Newton, whom he styled "the elder of the saints at Plymouth;" but, in 1845, the unscriptural views of Mr. Darby on Prophecy, and on the person and work of Christ, began to be discussed among the "Brethren" at Plymouth. Mr. Newton vigorously opposed the new views. Mr. Darby was furious; and with apparently calm but bitter determination he thus deliberately wrote of his once beloved brother:—"I have not the least doubt, from circumstances I have heard lately, of the authenticity of which I have not the smallest doubt, that Mr. Newton received his prophetic system by direct inspiration of Satan, analogous to the Irvingite delusion."* Dr. Tregelles says that had Mr. Newton "accorded with Mr. Darby on prophecy, we should never have heard his voice raised against him as to ministry or church order; his writings would not then have been scrutinised with severity, in order to glean matter of accusation."† Mr. W. Kelly,

* *Darby's "Plain Statement on the Sufferings of the Lord,"* quoted by Mr. John Cox, jun., in his *Refutation of certain charges made by Brethren*, p. 3.

† *Three Letters*, p. 32.

in his pamphlet, "Brethren and their Traducers," has denounced Mr. Newton's doctrines as "deep, damnable, fundamental denial of Christ,"—"strange and poisonous doctrine about our Lord,"—"blasphemous and heretical statements," and he is stigmatised as "the heretic," the "teacher of blasphemy," "the false teacher," "the evil-doer." After two years of strife, such as has seldom been equalled in bitterness and malice, Mr. Newton withdrew from "the Brethren," and has never since that time had any connection with them. He is now in London, "minister of a congregation of Protestants holding the Creeds and first eighteen Articles of the Church of England, but rejecting her order and ritual." According to Dr. Tregelles, the church at Plymouth, under Mr. Newton, had a "modified Presbyterianism."*

Mr. Darby broke with "the Brethren" at Bristol, because they refused to condemn Mr. Newton, and the breach remains unhealed. He denounced them as "the Bethesda blasphemers." They had received into fellowship Colonel Woodfall, and his brother Mr. Woodfall,

* *Five Letters*, p. 16.

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ment or useful learning; by grossly offensive familiarity of speaking of such sacred matters as the presence and teaching of the Holy Ghost; by a sectarianism all the more inexcusable that it was in the avoidance of sectarianism that Brethrenism originated; by these and similar errors the great scriptural principles of church communion have been marred and disfigured."

The errors of Mr. Darby are now the prevailing opinions of the "Brethren." The other divisions are too numerous for description here. When they declare that they and their societies are peaceful and paragons of perfection, they assert what their own writings prove to be untrue. Those who had joined them for a time have published their reasons for withdrawing from them—acknowledging that, like the dove from the ark of Noah, they found no rest

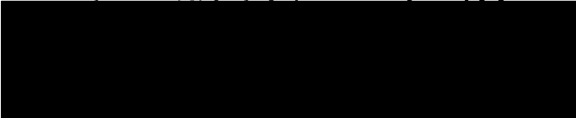
though both friends of Mr. Newton. Mr. Darby came to Bristol, and had an interview with Messrs. Müller and Craik, in which he "threatened to separate from them all believers in other places with whom they had fellowship." Find them firm, "he started off on his unholy errand, and surely destruction and misery have been in his ways. At Stafford he succeeded; at Kendal he failed. From one place to another he went, sowing discord and strife—the miseries he caused cast into the shade all that had taken place at Plymouth. In a letter, August 20, 1848, he says:—'I should not go to nor receive from Bethesda.'"* Mr. Craik, in a letter written in the summer of 1849,† makes the following admissions regarding the failure of Plymouthism:—"The truth is, Brethrenism, as such, is broken to pieces. By pretending to be wiser, holier, more spiritual, more enlightened than all other Christians; by rash and unprofitable intrusions into things not revealed; by making mysticism and eccentricity the test of spiritual life and depth; by preferring a dreamy and imaginative

* *Darbyism*, by Henry Groves, p. 47.

† See *Darbyism*, pp. 58, 59.

theology to the solid food of the Word of God ; by the adoption of a strange and repulsive phraseology ; by the undervaluing of practical godliness ; by submission of the understanding to leading teachers ; by overstraining some truths and perverting others ; by encouraging the forwardness of self-conceit ; by the disparagement of useful learning ; by grossly offensive familiarity of speaking of such sacred matters as the presence and teaching of the Holy Ghost ; by a sectarianism all the more inexcusable that it was in the avoidance of sectarianism that Brethrenism originated ; by these and similar errors the great scriptural principles of church communion have been marred and disfigured."

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for the sole of their foot till they returned to the communions they had left.

Eager to proselytise, Plymouth Brethren are found in the wake of religious awakenings as constantly as sharks follow ships. Their conduct in this respect is censurable and criminal in the highest degree. They unsettle the mind of the young convert at a time when he needs the wisest and most gentle treatment. They produce divisive courses, which lead Christian ministers and sober-minded Christian men to object to movements which ought to be only beneficial and blissful. Such troublers of the Church have a tremendous responsibility, and are really doing the work of the enemy, whatever they may themselves think. I have seen one of "the Brethren" detected and expelled from the very centre of a church where there were many anxious inquirers. I called the attention of the chairman, who had presided at the public service at the close of which the anxious meeting was held, to the presence of one who was supposed to be a Plymouthist. I conducted the chairman to the stranger, who was addressing three persons together who were supposed to be anxious. The

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chairman proposed the question, "Well friend, who authorised you to come here and converse with the anxious?" In the true spirit of a Plymouthist he confidently replied, "It was the Lord Jesus Christ, sir." They constantly claim the authority of the Holy Spirit, or of Christ Himself, for their doings, however disorderly or dishonourable they may be. The chairman, however, was not to be silenced by the arrogance of this intruder; and he sharply replied, "You give very good authority, but I have to inform you that no one is allowed to converse with the anxious here unless he has also the authority of the Secretary of our Committee." Nothing abashed, he went off to the Secretary, appointed by a committee consisting of ministers and members of all evangelical denominations. When the Secretary refused to authorise him, as he was a stranger, suspected of holding opinions different from those entertained by the parties conducting these meetings, he said that he could produce an attestation of his fitness from Mr. Jenkinson, of the Carrubbers' Close



When the case was reported to the committee, great surprise was expressed that any gentleman should intrude into such a meeting under false pretences; but the secretary remarked that it was in keeping with the doings of the party, and he was instructed to continue his vigilance. Two nights thereafter, the same gentleman crept stealthily into the anxious meeting; and, when the Secretary observed him, he demanded his attestation, which was not forthcoming, and he was again expelled.

I have referred to this case the more particularly, because the circumstances were known to a large committee with which I was associated for four weeks; and we were all of opinion that, had the intruder not been detected, he might have seriously injured a religious movement in which all denominations took part, and by which they all ultimately profited. Others may be less vigilant, and suffer from an excess of charity. I knew of a Plymouthist who, by denying his Church connection, was allowed to hold a series of meetings in the large hall of a Free Church. At the seventh meeting he distinctly declared, in the very presence of the minister, that the moral law is no longer binding on Christians "as a rule

life." Of course the minister felt constrained to expose the Plymouth error at the close; and the speaker immediately left the place. But such an exposure cannot be made without some desirable disturbance in a locality. The churches must either employ their own evangelists, or at least, ministers must take care that those whom they properly authorised whom they countenance. Such a system as Plymouthism, with its covert and cunning operations, is unworthy of the honoured name of Christian.

The great commission entrusted to the Christian Church is the world's conversion to God—a vast and noble enterprise. But the Plymouth Brethren let the world alone, and aim at dividing the Church, and they thereby weaken it. They regard it as their business to dis sever the people from God from all visible Church connection." It was recently confessed in public by one of themselves that they "only seek the good, and *put em together*, leaving the bad alone."* Like her troublers of society, they live on the industry of their neighbours, finding it easier to under the Church than to gather in the outcasts.

* Rev. R. H. Ireland's *Principles and Practices of Brethren*, p. 28.

CHAPTER III.

THE PRINCIPLES OF PLYMOUTHISM.

TRUTH has ever made greatest progress most opposed. Our views become more when we compare the truth with its oppos error. Orthodoxy is apt to become dead unopposed. The insidious introduction of is easy when a mere tacit assent has been to the doctrines of Christianity, without inquiry as to their truth. Whatever is n invested with at least a temporary interest we must beware of falling in love with , merely because it is something new to us. great doctrines of our holy religion have be carefully examined and so clearly expounde nearly two thousand years, by minds o highest order, that we have reason to st



test the new, and reject it if we find that the old is better. We must "prove all things, and hold fast the good." The followers of Mr. Darby would have us believe that he has discovered some precious pearls long concealed under a mass of rubbish ; but what he has brought up appears to us but refuse. Much has been said of the high-toned piety of the Plymouthists, and we willingly admit that many of them are truly pious men, while we more than doubt the piety of some of them whom we have known. One thing is very manifest, that they have a high idea of their individual excellence, and the excellence of their party as a whole. It is not, however, with piety, but with principles that we have to do. God alone can judge the heart; but we can test opinions by the infallible standard of revealed truth. I decidedly object that any man's supposed piety should be appealed to in favour of his false principles. The fact that the latter are demonstrably wrong, may be allowed to throw some doubt on the former.



46 VIEWS NOT PECULIAR TO PLYMOUTHISTS.

object to the truth they hold, merely because there are certain errors held in connection with it. I propose to examine the points on which they differ from other denominations, and which they consider to be of sufficient importance to justify their forming a new sect, and summoning, in the name of the Holy Ghost, all God's people to leave other churches and join theirs.

SECTION I.—VIEWS HELD BY PLYMOUTHISTS, BUT NOT PECULIAR TO THEM.

Their distinctive principles are not very easily discovered from their writings, on account of the concealment and confusion that are very prominent characteristics of their literature. They differ, too, from each other on some important points. On the *mode and subjects of baptism*, for instance, they are divided in opinion—some approving of infant baptism, while others reject it. Even if they had all adopted the anti-pedo-



VIEWS NOT PECULIAR TO PLYMOUTHISTS. 47

on very friendly terms with other denominations, though differing from them on that one point. Individuals holding Baptist views are occasionally found in the membership of Presbyterian churches; and, so far as my experience goes, their presence has never, in the slightest degree, interfered with the peace or comfort of the Church. My pastoral relation to such members has yielded to me only satisfaction and delight. The most influential of English preachers is a Baptist; and Presbyterian ministers are pleased to find that, by the very extensive circulation of his sermons, Mr. Spurgeon is the preacher at home to those members of their congregations who are at any time prevented from meeting with their brethren in the sanctuary on the Lord's day. We Presbyterians believe that "baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible Church, till they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him;" and we believe also that "the infants of such as are members of the visible Church are to be baptized." In regard



that, if the significant sign be observed, the quantity of water used is of little importance. There are many unimportant points on which the conscientious convictions of individual members ought to be respected, so as to avoid erecting insurmountable barriers to divide the Christian Church. But it is a remarkable fact, not generally known, that, while most of the Plymouth Brethren "repudiate infant baptism, and affirm that it is not baptism at all, by far the greater portion of them have never been baptized." The Rev. F. Whitfield, who was long associated with them, says, in a published letter:—"They hold that baptism is a divine institution; that God has enjoined it on all believers; and yet, strange to say, more than half of their number have never been baptized. In saying this, I am speaking from personal knowledge of facts. They are never warned by their teachers of the sin of living in disobedience to God's express command. They never hear one word about the subject. They continue from year to year in disobedience to God's Word; and except it is laid on the conscience of *individuals* among them to undergo the rite, they would never receive the slightest

remonstrance or warning from any of their teachers about this flagrant sin." *

Another opinion prominently held by the Plymouthists, but not peculiar to them, is the *premillennial advent* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Most Presbyterians expect the spiritual but not the personal reign of our Saviour on earth during the millennium; but many esteemed ministers and members of Presbyterian churches expect the personal reign, and there is no reason why this opinion should be made the shibboleth of a party. It is a skilful part of the Plymouth policy to give prominence to this part of their creed. They have at command a few texts which, by a little management, they can make to appear in favour of it. Simple-minded believers bow to the authority of Scripture, and express surprise that they never before saw this doctrine in the Bible. The Plymouthist then tells them that there are other things about which they have been kept in the dark; and millennarianism is made the stepping-stone by

receives a check in its initiatory stage. A case may be referred to in illustration of the method of Plymouth proselytism. A few years ago I had occasion to spend two weeks at Matlock, in Derbyshire. About two hundred persons were at that time connected with the Hydropathic Establishment there, while some were leaving, and others entering almost daily. Besides morning and evening worship, there was, daily, a short mid-day religious service. Many who come to be cured of bodily disease, or to recruit failing strength, had occasion to acknowledge, before leaving, that they had also obtained the higher blessing of spiritual health. Such acknowledgments were sometimes made by request, at what was, to us, the family altar; and thus our domestic devotion became something like a succession of revival services. In private intercourse with the patients a Plymouthist found an excellent opportunity for attempting to propagate his views. Almost all the denominations in England were represented there, but it was only incidentally, if



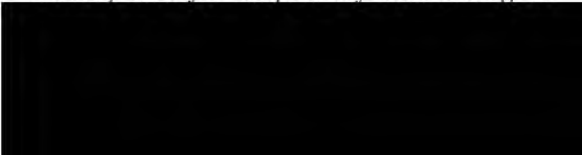
I had several conversations, turning partly on health, but chiefly on religion. He was of opinion that there is very little true religion in the world at the present time. I expressed a different opinion, and gave reasons for it. I fancied that the delicate state of his health had something to do with the pensive state of his mind when he spoke of religious parties. He lamented the state of disunion, by which God's people are kept apart from each other, clinging to their various denominations. I agreed with him, that a closer union is desirable, and said that a growing desire for it is appearing in the various churches; but I vindicated the Secession in Scotland, to which some of his remarks seemed to be directed; and I contended that division is not an unmixed evil. I should have answered him differently had I known that he was a Plymouthist. But somehow I fancied throughout that he belonged to the Evangelical party in the Church of England. At length he told me one day that he expected no great good till the



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tive; and added strongly, that he could not believe his Bible without also believing this. I said that I did not so understand the teaching of Scripture, but that I was aware that such views were very prevalent among the Evangelical party in the Church of England. He did not embrace the opportunity I thus gave him of telling his church connection, but he eagerly drew my attention to certain passages in the **First Epistle to the Thessalonians** in support of his **millennarian** views. He went to his work with a will, as if he had said to himself, "This one thing I do." I replied that such views were drawn from this Epistle in Paul's day, and that the **Second Epistle** was written to correct the false inferences. He attempted no reply to this, but went on to say

that their united influence would be greater than the effect of a single text. He was not aware that I had examined all his texts long ago in relation to this subject. He next called my attention to the 20th chapter of Revelation, which, he said, is so plain that it is impossible to misunderstand it, particularly the words, "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." I inquired, "What do you understand to be taught in these words?" He replied, "They plainly teach that all the saints will rise from their graves at the commencement of the millennium, and reign with Christ a thousand years." "Most certainly," I rejoined, "they teach no such doctrine. You surely don't mean to assert that all the saints that ever lived have been 'beheaded for the witness of Jesus.'" My remark presented an objection that had never occurred to him before, and it seemed most reasonable and natural, and yet unspeakably confounding to

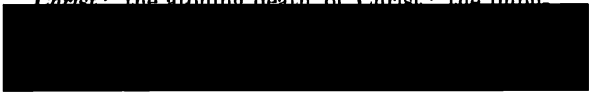


luctantly admitted that no doubt the words specially referred to the martyrs; but with some hesitation he added, "I think all the saints are meant to be included." I cautioned him against the evil practice of putting into a text what is foreign to it; and said that if he expected the bodies of all the saints to be raised from their graves before the millennium, he must find a text to prove it. He then asked what meaning I could attach to the words, if I rejected his explanation? I replied that the resurrection of the souls of the martyrs refers to the reappearance of the martyrs' fervent love and loyalty to Christ in the character of the men who shall enjoy the spiritual reign of Christ during the millennium; just as the promise of the return of Elijah was fulfilled when John the Baptist appeared in the spirit and power of the Old Testament prophet. I also showed him that another text he had quoted—"the dead in Christ shall rise first"



At this stage a Welsh clergyman of the Church of England entered the Library, where our friendly discussion had been conducted; and, as the gentleman immediately left on the entrance of a third party, our conversation was abruptly closed. The clergyman, whose acquaintance I had had the pleasure of making a few days before, said, "You appear to have had an earnest conversation with our Plymouth Brother." I was surprised to hear that he was a Plymouthist, and I wished much to have a conversation with him as such; but, as he left the establishment next day, I had no further opportunity of speaking with him. I afterwards ascertained, however, that he had made himself offensive to a number of people by urging his peculiar views.

Having thus adverted to some of the views held by the Plymouthists, which are not peculiar to them, I proceed to examine some of their more distinctive principles. They differ from orthodox Christians in their views on the permanent obligation of the moral law; the law of the Sabbath; the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ; the atoning death of Christ; the immu-

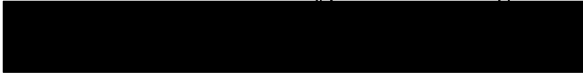


forgiveness of sins ; the presidency of the Spirit ; and the Church and its office-bearers. These are the main points of difference between the Unitarian and the evangelical Christians ; and under each I shall state, in the words of their own acknowledged writers, what the views of Plymouthists really are, and then prove that they are untenable.

SECTION II.—THE PERMANENT OBLIGATION
OF THE MORAL LAW.

They hold that the moral law, given by God through Moses, is not binding on believers in Christ. To devout readers of the Bible this seems so startling a statement that the clearest evidence will require to be adduced to prove that the Plymouthists really hold an opinion so erroneous. It is not difficult, however, to find the required evidence. Mr. C. H. Mackintosh is a Plymouth preacher of great authority, and a volumi-

—"If I am to regard the ten commandments as the transcript of the mind of God, then, I ask, is there nothing in the mind of God save 'Thou shalt,' and 'Thou shalt not?' Is there no grace—no mercy? In the law God sets forth what a man ought to be, and pronounces a curse on him if he is not that. It is a manifest impossibility that any one can get life and righteousness by that which can only curse him; and unless the condition of the sinner and the character of the law are totally changed, it can do nothing else but curse him. Many will admit that we cannot get life by the law; but they maintain, at the same time, that the law is our rule of life. Now the apostle declares that as many as are of the works of law are under the curse (Gal. iii. 10). How could we ever admit the thought that those whom God had received in grace He would rule by law? Thus, then, it is obvious that the law is neither the ground of life to the sinner, nor the rule of life to the Christian." This long extract is a mere summary, and indicates great



may be looked at in two ways : first, as a ground of justification ; and, secondly, as a rule of life.* The Plymouth error arises from confounding these two things, which are sufficiently distinct. We are justified by faith in Christ, and not by the deeds of the law ; but the law still serves as a rule of life to believers in Christ. The apostle Paul distinctly directed the brethren at Rome to look to the law of God as the rule of their lives ; and he quoted several of its precepts by way of illustration :—"Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet ; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Rom. xiii. 9). The same apostle directed the Ephesian brethren to the Decalogue, and quoted its fifth precept, when He said, "Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise : that it may be well



pression with the Plymouthists, that "the law can do nothing but curse;" but their view is directly the opposite of Paul's, for he said—"I delight in the law of the Lord after the inward man" (Romans vii. 22). At this stage of my argument I turned to Darby's *Exposition*, but his remarks on this text are a strange mass of confusion and inconsistency. The writer was evidently in a muddle when he penned them. For the sake of those who may not have the book at hand, I shall quote a clause or two. In the description of his spiritual state, which Paul gives in the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, Mr. Darby says, there is "nothing in respect of Christ and the Spirit: He is not there yet, but on the way." Even when he delights in the law of the Lord after the inward man, he is not yet in Christ. "He has a new man, a new life;" and yet is not in Christ.* The man who can write such undiluted nonsense as this is unfit to be a religious teacher, far less the chief leader of a widely-spread religious sect. His

blind, or willfully shuts his eyes. At the period described by Paul, he was evidently in Christ, and in possession of the new nature, which the Holy Spirit alone can produce in our hearts. He received the moral law of the Old Testament as an expression of the divine will, delighted in it, and made it the rule of his life. The old man struggled against the new, but God gave the victory on the side of the new, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Mr. Darby is as much at fault in describing the stages of Paul's spiritual experience, as he is in mapping out what he calls the different classes of our Saviour's sufferings; but the presumption in the latter case is unspeakably greater, as the subject is so profoundly mysterious. Mr. Darby's error regarding the

nothing but curse, is utterly opposed to the finely-expressed sentiment of the sweet singer of Israel, when he says :—"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart : the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clear, enduring for ever : the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned : and in keeping of them there is great reward" (Ps. xix. 7-11). David and Paul agree ; but both of them differ from the Plymouthists in their views of the divine law ; and no consistent Plymouthist could sing this sweet song of Zion.

The ten commandments have been called a transcript, or expression of the divine mind on the points to which they refer ; and Mr. Mackintosh objects to this expression : but we did not

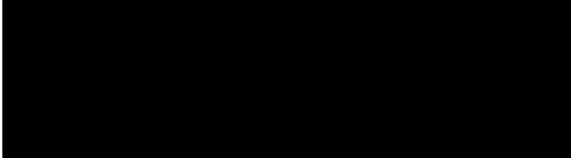
asks, "Is there no grace?—no mercy?" He forgets that even at Sinai the Lord passed by Moses, and proclaimed:—"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (Ex. xxxiv. 6). Grace and mercy were thus revealed; and they were foreshadowed in the typical sacrifices; but they are more clearly unfolded under the New Testament. Grace provides the medium through which mercy flows to us, and provides the motive by which we are induced to follow the law as the rule of our conduct.

Paul says that the Gentiles "show the works of the law written in their hearts" (Rom. ii. 15); and that Christians are "not without law to God, but under the law to Christ" (1 Cor. ix. 21);

found to be *unto death*.' It evidently did not prove a rule of *life* to him. It was the very opposite, even a rule of death."* There is here a good instance of that strange confounding of things that differ, which runs through the writings of this well-meaning author, who is esteemed a prince among Plymouth preachers; but this is a characteristic which totally unfits him for conducting discussions in divinity. The word *life* refers, in the one case, to a totally different thing from what it does in the other. Paul uses it in the sense of justification or salvation; and, when we speak of a rule of *life*, we refer to conduct. Justification could not be obtained by the law; but Paul followed the law, and recommended it to all believers as a rule of conduct.

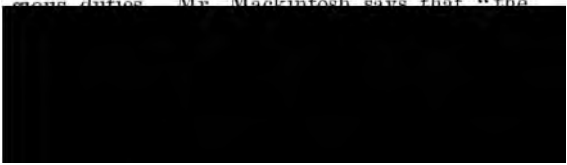
SECTION III.—THE LAW OF THE SABBATH.

The Plymouthists hold that the Sabbath is not of permanent obligation. It may be supposed that the rejection of the Sabbath is neces-



founded on the institution of the former at the creation of the world. Mr. C. H. Mackintosh, in his *Notes on Genesis*, thrusts his head with great force against this post. He tells us that, in the second chapter of the book of Genesis, "there is no command given to man whatever, but simply the record that 'God rested on the seventh day.'" He proceeds to quote the words, enabling the reader to see that the record is totally inconsistent with his representation of it. "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." This is something more than the mere record that "God rested on the seventh day." Mr. Mackintosh confines his attention to one of the two facts

here is opposed not to weariness, but to action ; and we are to regard God as presenting an example for the imitation of His creatures. The rest was merely from creative agency, for He still conducts the operations of providence on the Sabbath as on other days. That His procedure in this case was intended to appear to us in the light of an example may be inferred from the record in Genesis, and is abundantly evident from the language of the fourth precept of the Decalogue, where we are commanded to “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy ;” and the reason is added—“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” There is a close analogy between God’s rest and ours : He rested merely from creative agency, while His works of providence proceeded ; and we rest merely from secular employments, to be actively engaged in religious duties. Mr. Mackintosh says that “the



be celebrated amid an undefiled creation—a creation on which no spot of sin could be discerned. God can have no rest where there is sin.” This is a specimen of the meaningless trash that abounds in Mr. Mackintosh’s book. He speaks of the Sabbath as if it were only God’s rest; whereas God set the example for man to copy. How could God *bless* the Sabbath otherwise than by making it the appointed time for the communication of blessings to the sons of men who properly observe it? When it is said that God *sanctified* the Sabbath, the only possible meaning is, that He set it apart to a sacred use. Mr. Mackintosh does not attempt to explain these words. He seems to have felt that they were in his way, and he simply ignores them, passing on, heedless of their presence. There is the clearest evidence that the Sabbath was instituted in Eden for the entire race; and the Plymouthists make common cause with



and on the special precepts regarding it, which were evidently meant only for the Jews. On the 31st chapter, he jumbles the whole in a strange mixture when he says:—"This is as explicit and absolute as anything can be. It fixes 'the seventh day,' and none other; and it positively forbids, on pain of death, all manner of work. There can be no avoiding the plain sense of this. And, be it remembered, that there is not so much as a single line of Scripture to prove that the Sabbath has been changed, or the strict principles of its observance in the smallest degree relaxed." Its observance at the giving of the manna proves that it was not instituted at Sinai when the Moral Law was given. The fourth precept of the Decalogue refers to an institution which dates from the creation, and there is not one Jewish element in it. The special injunctions of the Jewish judicial law were not meant to apply to other nations. If there is no line of Scripture to prove that the day has been changed from the seventh to the first, then there is no



weekly rest at all. They have the example of the Apostolic Church for meeting on the first day of the week ; but they have no authority for a holy rest during the entire day. When leaders throw everything loose, it is not surprising that their followers consider themselves free to act as they please on the first day of the week. In opposition to Plymouth error, we adhere to the orthodox view of the Sabbath—that from the beginning of the world a seventh part of time was set apart by God for rest from labour and for holy service ; and that only the day was changed from the seventh to the first day of our Saviour's example after His resurrection followed by that of His inspired apostles.

SECTION IV.—THE HUMANITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The Brethren do not admit that our Saviour possessed a human nature altogether like our



body received anything of the substance of His mother. Mr. Mackintosh, in his *Notes on Leviticus*, page 35, said:—"The first Adam, even in his unfallen condition, was 'of the earth;' but the second Man was, as to His manhood, 'the Lord from heaven.'" This is a clear and distinct statement of the opinion that our Saviour's body was not of the substance of the Virgin. The same heretical opinion is expressed by Plymouthists in many Jesuitical forms; but this statement has the great advantage over them all, that its meaning is unquestionable. Few men have mastered their system so thoroughly as Dr. Carson; and it is justly remarked by that able controversialist, that "they not only have a very complete system, but they are as tyrannical as Rome in keeping their followers to it. Although the Christian public cannot divine what their system is, it is perfectly understood by those who are thoroughly initiated into it. The great difficulty of getting at it arises from the fact that it is always put forth in a completely Jesuitical form.



Mr. Mackintosh's declaration has occasioned a very instructive controversy, in which Dr. Carson has rendered great service to the cause of truth ; and the discussion has thrown considerable light on the Plymouth system, both in relation to its principles and its practices. Dr. Carson called attention, in the *Coleraine Chronicle*, to the Plymouth heresy regarding our Saviour's humanity ; and Mackintosh replied that it was strange he should have singled out one passage from 351 pages to prove the heresy against him. He did not deny that the words proved it ; and he neither defended it, nor recanted it, nor denied that he had ever held it, but he referred to page 37 of his book, for a statement which seemed to prove a different doctrine. This

other person for the previous 351 Fridays, but rather made a sort of an attempt on one occasion to save a life, he submits that he not only has no right to be found guilty of the murder he committed on the Friday, but he has a right to be very indignant to be put on his trial at all. What, I ask, would be thought of the advocate who would defend a case on such principles? Would he not be hissed out of court? And yet this is exactly Mr. Mackintosh's position." Moreover, Dr. Carson contends that the corrective passage referred to contains "nothing at all to the purpose;" and he adds:—"I never charged Mr. Mackintosh with denying that Christ was *born* of the Virgin, was composed of flesh and blood, and had a human body; but I did charge him that he calls this flesh and blood, this human body, 'the Lord from heaven,' the 'divine man,' and the 'heavenly humanity;' and, consequently, that he makes this flesh and blood, this human body, to be really and truly God. Hence, if this human body



which the Doctor calls your attention, it means nothing more or less than what the apostle states in 1 Cor. xv. 47 ;" but he adds, "I grant you that had I anticipated controversy, I would have guarded the sentence of which the Doctor makes such a mountain." In this *unguarded* language he laid himself open again to the assault of his vigorous foe. As he refused at this stage to recant, Dr. Carson thus renewed the assault :—"What an expression for a man calling himself a Christian ! Would the greatest heathen that ever lived make such a statement ? He does not say that he would have expunged every shred of the deadly doctrine from his book, but, in the face of controversy, he would have *guarded* it ! Like some other expressions in his writings, it would then have been so thoroughly after the fashion of the oracles of ancient days, that a person might read it in any way he pleased. For example, when Mr. Mackintosh



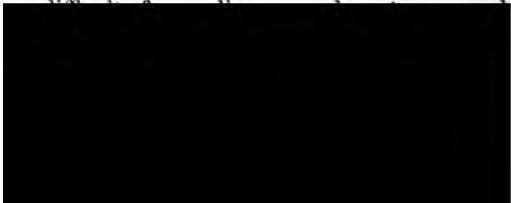
the Godhead with the humanity of Christ; but another has ample room and verge enough to argue that the words apply alone to the glory of His manhood—to what is called, in the Valentinian style of the second century, the ‘heavenly humanity;’ in short, that it might correspond with the ideas which were stoutly maintained by a poor member of Mr. Mackintosh’s congregation in Coleraine, that the Virgin had no more to do with Christ than the pump has to do with the water that runs through it. This is an uncommonly apt illustration of the views promulgated in the *Notes on Leviticus*; and I would like to know where this poor, illiterate man got the doctrine, if he did not learn it from Mr. Mackintosh. Can it be supposed he got it in the writings of the Valentinians,* or the Monophysites, of the second and fifth centuries? I am certain he never saw or heard of their works.”

Mr. Mackintosh had occasion to issue a new

* Valentinus admitted that Christ was born of Mary.



edition of his *Notes* while this controversy was in progress. He calls it the "second edition revised" but he says in his preface:—"I have carefully revised the following pages, and, I may say, have left them very much as I found them. Some expressions here and there, which seemed likely to be misunderstood, I have slightly touched. The doctrine of the book is still adhered to. The discussion on our Saviour's humanity is introduced by the old remark, calling attention to "the vital nature of the doctrine," preparing the reader for something new. Three expressions have been expunged—"as to His manhood," "divine man," and "heavenly man;" but the doctrine expressed by them is retained. This is a most Jesuitical proceeding. Speaking of the humanity of Christ, he retains the text contrasting the first Adam with the second Man; so that he does not in the least alter the sense by leaving out the words "as to His manhood." He has made it

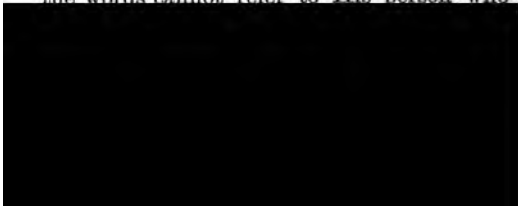


when he could no longer, with the least honour, withhold it. He said :—"I feel it due to God, to His Church, and to my own conscience, to acknowledge that I made a wrong statement in the first edition of my *Notes on Leviticus*, p. 35, in the following passage :—'The second Man was, as to *His manhood*, the Lord from heaven.' This mistake, together with the serious inference deducible from it, was pointed out to me by a dear and venerable servant of Christ, who requested me to reconsider the passage, and correct it in the second edition. I did *correct* the mistake, and added a note, not to guard error, but to guard the truth. But this, I feel, was not enough. I ought to have *confessed* the mistake, and should have done so in the preface to the second edition had I been sufficiently self-emptying and careless of my reputation as a writer. I do reverently believe that our blessed Lord Jesus Christ was 'made of the seed of David, according to the flesh;' that He was truly of the substance of the Virgin—"flesh and blood;" as



believe it honest when Mr. Mackintosh has purged the condemned error from all his books which he has not yet done.

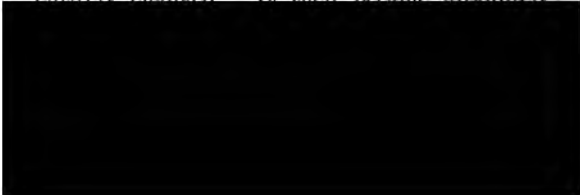
Mr. Darby tried to cover the retreat of his friend. His *Brethren and their Reviewers* : curious specimen of special pleading. He admits that Mr. Mackintosh's language was "open attack ;" but he contends that the attack "unfounded and unrighteous." Mr. Darby confesses that his friend has blundered ; but tries hard to make it appear that he is chargeable with no error. As Dr. Carson has remarked he might as well swear at once that "the black crow is white." He proposes thus to amend his famous utterance of his friend, so as to render it unassailable :—"Had he said He was I from heaven in His manhood, he would have been perfectly right, and he who denied would be unquestionably a heretic ; 'as to' separates the manhood, and therefore the words cannot refer to His person who



but a thin cloak for the error; for the connection shows that Mr. Mackintosh was referring exclusively to our Saviour's humanity, and not at all to His divinity. Mr. Darby elaborately proves, what no one denies, that the term Lord is applied to Christ in reference to His mediatorial authority; but this is entirely aside from the point, for the text in question does not refer to His mediatorial authority, but to His divinity. On reading his pamphlet, I would have come to the conclusion that, had Mr. Darby been consulted, he would have advised his friend to hold the fort, and promised to assist in defending it; but it appears, from his own confession, that he was consulted by Mr. Mackintosh previous to the publication of the heresy.* His words are:—
“When first it was shown to myself, before it was publicly in question, it was in manuscript, with an answer by another person. I replied to an inquiry on it. Both have gone beyond Scripture, but I do not believe either meant anything wrong.” On reading this declaration



who seems an amiable man; for it is thoroughly inconsistent with his own remark that, if he had anticipated controversy, he would have "guarded" his statement. It appears that controversy had begun among the Brethren, and that Mr. Darby's judgment had been obtained. The heavenly humanity theory was therefore Mr. Mackintosh's deliberate and settled opinion, after due consultation. In the words of Dr. Carson, "The opinion was *already controverted*, whilst the work was in manuscript, by some of the Plymouths, and the matter had to be settled by *Judge* Darby, whose decision, of course, as the decision of an autocrat, must silence in future all controversy on the part of his followers. For the initiated, it did not now require to be guarded. The heterodox opinion might possibly be slipped in on the public without their being aware of it. In this way it would gain currency. But the moment I appeared on the scene, the matter was entirely changed. It then became absolutely



discussion which was placed before Darby in manuscript. Such is Plymouthism."*

It is not for me to interfere in the personal contest between Mr. Darby and Dr. Carson. Mr. Darby has found his match, and something more. On the Doctor's dissecting table he is completely shorn of his strength. Nor is it pleasant for me to write severely of the two chief men among the Brethren; but I am sorry for those excellent people who are misled by them. There are some devout ladies who read Mr. Mackintosh's *Notes* in daily portions. Their judgment is sadly at fault, and I should be glad to guide them to more profitable reading.

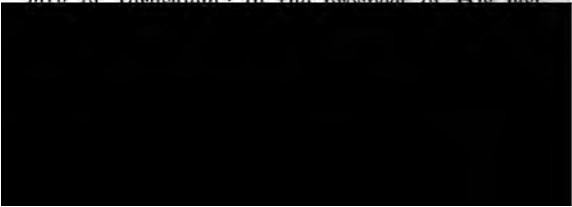
But the true humanity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ must be held firmly on the ground of Scripture. It is indeed a precious doctrine, to be prized and loved. We are assured in Scripture that "the word was made flesh;" that "forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same;" that "God sent



“ was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh.” He who sits on the throne of heaven is our Brother, and he sympathizes with us in all our sorrows;—

“Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother's eye ;
Partaker of the human name,
He knows the frailty of our frame.”

The distinct historical statements attesting the real humanity of our Saviour are numerous, but some of the indications of His humanity are peculiarly interesting, as evincing the tenderness by which He was characterized. After His fasting in the wilderness, He suffered from hunger; weary and thirsty, He sat by the well of Samaria; the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay His head; He wept by the grave of Lazarus; He wept, too, over the devoted city of Jerusalem: in the prospect of His last



enfeebled by being scourged, He was sinking under the fatigue of bearing His cross, and those who led him to Calvary saw it necessary to compel a countryman to bear it after Him ; His hands and feet were pierced with nails, and His side by a spear, when He shed His blood on the accursed tree ; suffering from the intolerable thirst which accompanies crucifixion, He cried, "I thirst," and received a sponge with vinegar ; after which He exclaimed aloud, "It is finished !" A life of suffering was terminated by a painful death, and man was redeemed.

SECTION V.—THE ATONING DEATH OF CHRIST.

The Plymouthists hold that our Saviour's death was not atoning—that He made atonement by suffering, not by death. I am aware that the views of Mr. Darby on this point have occasioned much controversy among the Brethren, and that these views have led some of his followers to withdraw from him. A gentleman in



tract of extracts from the "*Sufferings of Christ*," by J. N. Darby, which he enclosed for my benefit. I am obliged by his attention; but I have in my possession a much larger series of *Extracts* from the same treatise, which is now out of print, and it appears that Mr. Darby is unwilling to re-issue it. Mr. Darby uses the phrase "blood of Christ," in a peculiar sense, not including his death. Mr. W. H. Dorman, who is thoroughly acquainted with Mr. Darby's views, and their modifications at various stages, having been intimately associated with him for twenty-eight years, in his "*Solemn Appeal to the Brethren in London and elsewhere regarding the error that is asserted among them of the Unatoning Death of Christ*," gives the following summary of Plymouth views on the point in hand:—"Atone-ment is not by the cross—nor by Christ's enduring the curse of the law—nor in Christ being smitten by God upon the cross—nor simply by Christ's death" (p. 9). We do not expect such



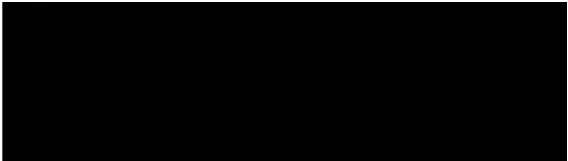
his own words. In his *Synopsis* on Psalm cii. he says:—"Christ is fully looked at as man chosen out of the people and exalted to be Messiah, and now instead of taking the kingdom, he is rejected and cut off.* The time is the immediate approach of the cross, but was, we know, perhaps often anticipated in thought, as John xii. He looks to Jehovah, who cast down him whom he had called to the place of Messiah, but who now meets *indignation and wrath*. We are far here beyond looking at sufferings as coming from man. They did, and were felt, but men are not before Him in judgment; nor is it his expiatory work, though that which wrought it is here—the indignation and wrath. It is himself, his own being cut off as a man. On the 69th Psalm Mr. Darby says, "It is more difficult *to get hold of* this third kind of suffering." In the papers on the *sufferings of Christ* he says:—"Now, in the 69th Psalm we have the cross also, and not merely the wickedness of man, though that is fully entered into, but the trusting of God and



distress under sense of sins. How is this to be distinguished from the atoning work of Christ?" These sentences are plainer than the enigmatical utterances in which Mr. Darby usually indulges when he is stating some heretical view which he knows he may be afterwards challenged to defend. But he is slippery as an eel, and it is difficult to detect and hold him fast. His warmest friends cannot defend him against the charge of presumptuously rushing into the mysterious and awful subject of our Saviour's sufferings, and telling us of a third class in which there is no atonement. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." Mr. Dorman might well say, "If language can express anything definitely what is expressed here is, that Christ 'meets indignation and wrath' at the hand of Jehovah, but 'not in his expiatory work.' I have never ventured to define what Mr. Darby *holds*. Few persons, I suppose, would be competent to do so,



self.”* Mr. Dorman is entitled to be heard with great respect and authority on the subject of Plymouth teaching, both oral and written, as he was for the period of a generation associated with the Brethren. And he says :—“ I am told that there were three hours on the cross, during which our Lord was bearing sufferings, *not atoning*. There were also three hours in which He was enduring *atoning* sufferings, viz., from the sixth to the ninth hour. He then emerged from these sufferings, and dismissed his soul in peace. In terms this was expressed to me by a young gentleman fresh from Mr. Darby’s inspirations, and who assured me that his own views and Mr. Darby’s perfectly coincided. To my sorrow, I have since learned it from Christians of unquestioned piety and intelligence, and have heard it also in all simplicity avowed by the uninstructed poor. If there were nothing else, the prevalence of this doctrine alone would utterly debar me from sitting down at the Lord’s, table,



where by possibility all my spiritual sensibilities and reverence for my Lord's adorable sufferings, which none but God can fathom, would be in danger of being outraged by its announcement. I make no further comment on the profanity of these abhorred speculations, where every heart should wonder and adore." * Mr. Darby distinguishes that atonement is not simply by the cross; but the writers of the New Testament everywhere refer to the cross as the very symbol of atonement. Paul said,—“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal. vi. 14). And “the sweet singer of England” sang long ago, in strains that have become familiar to us as often heard in the songs of the sanctuary—

“When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,

by the death of Christ; but Paul says that "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). The contradiction between the Pauline and the Darbyite teaching is complete.

Mr. Dorman further says,—“It is not a little striking—and it speaks much for the spiritual judgment and foresight of the writer—that in the ‘*Notes on the 6th Psalm*’ (by J. S. Harris), in which Mr. Newton’s doctrine was first brought to light, the following passage (p. 47) occurs :— ‘I am greatly alarmed at this mysticism. How easy would be the next step that atonement was in the inward experience of Jesus, and not really in his actual death on the cross.’” Now whether Mr. Newton or his followers ever advanced this step, I am unable to say; but I believe they did not. One thing however is certain, that it is precisely and absolutely the step which Mr. Darby and his followers have taken.* Mr. Darby has drifted to conclusions which he evidently did not at first anticipate, and his followers have become thoroughly

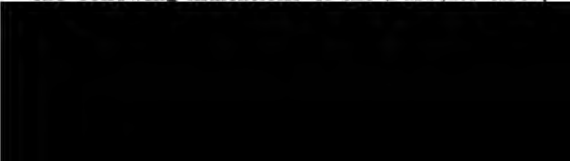


sufferings of Christ. Mr. Dorman remarks:—
“They are told that they must try to establish in their thoughts what I have called *an impossible mental conception*; and for the sake of this to cast away every thought they have hitherto derived from Scripture upon the subject. I ask, is it not simply so? Mr. Darby concedes (*now*) that the smiting in act (or the actual smiting in Zech. xiii. 7) of our Lord, by Jehovah, was only *on the Cross*. But, while he concedes this, he says it must be also extended over the whole period from the supper. . . . By force of evidence he is compelled to admit that the smiting was only *on the Cross*; but this is merely that he may take back his admission, and say that it was also *before* the Cross.”* This Darbyite Jesuitism seems very widely to have infected the followers of Mr. Darby; but they cannot follow it up so cleverly as their leader does. “As their own consciences have had no part in their

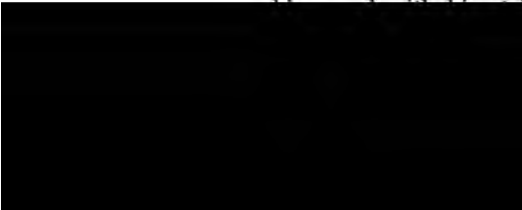


an excessive and falsely directed zeal.”* For a time Mr. Darby seemed to relent in his correspondence with Mr. Dorman; but he was too proud to yield; and after the former had returned from a three months’ visit to the south of France the latter states the result:—“Instead of any modification of the doctrine or its withdrawal, as I had hoped, or any correction of faulty statements, which had been solemnly promised, I found now that all was to be maintained.” Mr. Darby shows the same Jesuitical vacillation in his “*Righteousness and Law*,” where he censures and yet tries to vindicate the views of his friend, Mr. Mackintosh, on our Saviour’s humanity.

The unscriptural views of Mr. Darby regarding the death of Christ have extensively tinged the writings of his followers. The point is fundamental. Death is the penalty of sin, and Jesus could obtain its remission only by paying the penalty. Let the reader mark the following indications of the Darbyite error,



on Leviticus * :—"The primary aspect of Christ's work was to God-ward. It was an ineffable delight to Him to accomplish the will of God on this earth. A perfect man on the earth accomplishing the will of God even in death, an object of amazing interest to the mind in heaven. Christ, in the burnt offering, exclusively for the eye and heart of God. *The burnt offering does not foreshadow Christ on the cross bearing sin*, but Christ on the cross accomplishing the will of God. The idea of sin-bearing—the imputation of sin—the wrath of God, do not appear in the burnt offering." It is to be hoped that few hearers of the gospel require to be told that these statements are in direct opposition to the teaching of Scripture. Isaac spoke of Christ when he said, "The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all;" and "was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement



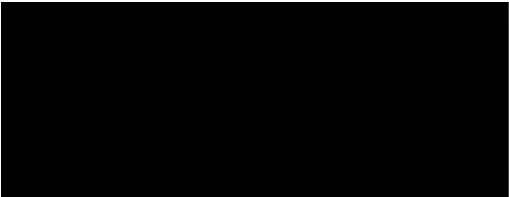
the Scriptures ;” and Peter taught that Christ “bare our sins in his own body on the tree ;” while John testifies of the God of love, that “the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sins.” Adhering, then, to the doctrine of prophets and apostles, we must reject the Plymouth heresy—however explained or modified—that the death of Christ is not atoning.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRINCIPLES OF PLYMOUTHISM—*contd.*

SECTION VI.—THE IMPUTATION OF CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The Brethren hold that Christ's righteousness is not imputed to believers. They hold that righteousness is imputed to the believer, but not the righteousness of Christ. "It is remarkable," says Mr. C. Stanley, "that the Scriptures never use the expression, 'the imputed righteousness of Christ,' or even 'the righteousness of Christ;' but always 'the righteousness of God.'* Does Scripture ever say that Christ kept the law for us for justifying righteous? I am not aware of a single text."† "It is a truth that Christ obeyed the law of God,'



Mr. W. Kelly; "it is *not* the truth that even His keeping of the law is the real sense of God's righteousness, or the ground of our justification before God."* Mr. Darby says,† "I do not believe in the penal and vicarious character of Christ's sufferings during His active service, nor do I believe in the appropriation of His legal righteousness to me, as failing in legal righteousness myself." This is Mr. Darby's mode of stating the universal doctrine of orthodox divines—that Christ's righteousness, including His active and passive obedience, is imputed to believers. The Darbyites are not in the least disconcerted by the host of sound divines opposed to their views. Mr. Darby has spoken, and has pressed or perverted every opposing text into accordance with his opinions; and consequently all his followers are obsequious. Their sentiment regarding their leader may be expressed by an accommodation of the words of Pope on Sir Isaac Newton—

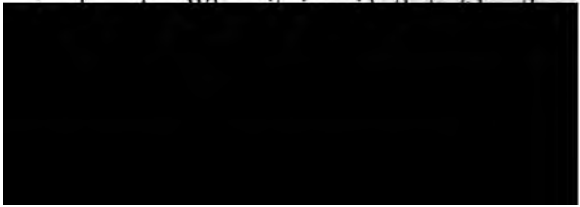


But the Darbyite doctrine introduces only darkness and confusion into the subject of our Lord's imputed righteousness; and it has been ably refuted by such writers as Mr. Newton and Dr. Tregelles, who belonged to the Brethren till they were driven away by the progress of error among them. Mr. Darby fearlessly places himself in single-handed antagonism to the whole world of theologians (though he proves himself a miserably poor theologian) when he says:—"It is not in vain that the Holy Ghost on so important a subject never uses one expression—that is, the righteousness of Christ—and constantly the other—that is—God's righteousness. We learn the current of the mind of the Spirit thus. Theology uses *always* that which the Holy Ghost *never* does, and cannot tell what to make of that which the Holy Ghost always uses. Surely there must be error in the whole way of thinking of theology here."* Mr. Mackintosh re-echoes the words of

himself. But the confident assertion of the

apostles bear testimony to the righteousness of Christ which is imputed to us by faith. The righteousness of God is one of the divine attributes, and cannot be imputed to man ; but the meritorious righteousness of our Mediator can be and is imputed to us—reckoned to our account. By Jeremiah the Lord said :—"I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and this is His name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our righteousness." Daniel promised that Messiah the Prince should "bring in everlasting righteousness." By the righteousness of God the apostle Paul evidently means the righteousness of Christ, when he tells us of those who went about to establish their own righteousness, not having submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. x. 3, 4). These texts expose the miserably shallow criticism of the Darbyite expounders. In the well-known form of sound words, justification is defined to be "an act of God's free

received by faith alone."* And the doctrine herein contained is proved by the inspired words of Paul:—"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom. v. 18, 19). It is a mere cavil on the part of Mr. Darby and his followers, when they say that we never read in Scripture of the righteousness of Christ. What other meaning is possible where the Spirit predicts by Jeremiah that the coming Redeemer should be called *Jehovah-Tsidkenu*, which signifies "The Lord our Righteousness?" It is a distinct declaration that the righteousness of Christ becomes ours; and from the fuller declarations of the New Testament, we learn that this righteousness is reckoned to our account when we believe



what "One" can possibly be referred to but Christ? The Plymouth doctrine on this point, therefore, is utterly inconsistent both with the Old Testament and the New; and the error is the more to be deplored because it affects the Scriptural doctrine of justification by faith in the Redeemer's righteousness, which Luther aptly described as "the article of a standing or a falling church." Jehovah-Tsidkenu was the watchword of the Reformers; and it is still precious to all the children of God. The Plymouth perversion will recoil on the party without injuring the doctrine.

The Plymouthists admit the imputation of righteousness, but not that of Christ. It has alienated from them such excellent men as the learned and judicious Dr. Tregelles. It is not surprising that such men should leave them. The wonder is that they were ever connected with them; but their own explanation is, that the errors into which the party have drifted were at first unknown among them.



SECTION VII.—PRAYER FOR THE FORGIVENESS
OF SINS.

The Plymouthists hold that it is improper to offer public prayer for the forgiveness of sins. The reader is apt to suspect that there may be some mistake here, for the form which we usually call "the Lord's Prayer," and which is widely used in public worship, contains a petition for forgiveness in its fifth petition; but he will probably be much surprised to learn that the Plymouthists consider that this prayer is not to be used either by saints or sinners. This is a strong statement, but it can be easily proved. Mr. W. Kelly has written a small treatise entitled, "*Thoughts on the Lord's Prayer*," which is referred to by other Plymouthists as an authoritative production. In the commencement of his treatise, the author says:—"God forbid that I should insinuate anything imperfect as to



prepares the reader to receive something very wide from the truth.* Another of Mr. Kelly's preliminary observations is this:—"It is well to observe also that the prayer is the expression of individual wants. I do not mean that the disciples may not have used it together as well as singly, but it nowhere supposes the Christians formed into one body" (p. 9). So far is this remark from being true, that the very contrary is the truth. The prayer has no reference whatever to individual wants, as distinguished from those which are common to all the disciples; and not only may the disciples "have used it together," but its language applies properly to a social, and not to a solitary exercise. The plural is used throughout, so that two at least are supposed to unite in offering its various petitions. The petitioner does not say, my Father; but the petitioners say, "*Our* Father," "Give *us* this day *our* daily bread," "Forgive *us our* debts," and "lead *us* not into temptation." Mr. Kelly's positions consist chiefly of bold and baseless



assertions. He thinks that the Lord's Prayer is totally unsuitable on the lips of a sinner, who cannot come with his sins to God and cry, Father forgive! If this criticism were just, there would be ground for the blasphemy, that our Saviour made a mistake when He spoke of the prodigal returning to God, and saying, "Father, I have sinned." Yet Mr. Kelly thinks that "if the Lord's Prayer were applied to, or appropriated by, an unrenewed soul, as the prescribed means of blessing for his case, a real injury would be done:" nay, more, such an application "would ruin and deny the gospel, which in that case would be of works, and no more grace" (p. 12). And what is the ground of this mock attempt to summon up the awful thunders of Sinai? It is the existence of the clause, "as we forgive our debtors;" which Mr. Kelly holds to be an impossible condition for an unconverted man. But he totally mis-

loving and beloved disciple John would have fared ill if the clause had been applied to him according to Mr. Kelly's interpretation. He wished to call down fire from heaven to consume the offending Samaritans who refused to receive the Master and his disciples; and to ask from God similar treatment would be to ask to be consumed by fire. Neither saint nor sinner can ask forgiveness on the ground of his own forgiving spirit; for the sole ground of our pardon is the righteousness of Christ, who has obeyed and suffered in our stead. The clause in question is virtually a prayer that God would enable us from the heart to forgive others. Over and over again Mr. Kelly asserts that the prayer was once suitable for saints, but that it is not so now (pp. 21, 23, 24, 25). His great argument is, that Christ said in His valedictory address, "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in My name," and that He requested them to pray in His name hereafter; but a moderate perspicacity might have enabled him to see that our Saviour's



qualities of a sound interpreter ; but he sweeps on through his blunders, not only with unhesitating, but with growing confidence. He thinks he has demonstrated that the prayer is unsuitable for either saints or sinners ; and he adds :—

“ Still more manifest is the mistake for a company of believers, alas ! of believers and unbelievers mixed together, to take up the Lord’s Prayer, as the expression of their common need and worship. There is no such thought in the passage as a *body* thus using it ” (p. 25). There is no saint so holy as to be without sin, and therefore the saint can freely join with the sinner in a cry for forgiveness. In allusion to the Plymouth objection to the confession of sin, the late Dr. Duncan made the sage and suggestive remark :—

“ The Brethren don’t like Romans vii. O, well, if a believer does not sin, so much the better : it is very good ; but if he sins and is not troubled about it, that is not good. Was Noah,

afterwards, for that would be unbelief." Mr. Kelly anticipates and answers an objection:—"How was it that the Lord gave the prayer in His word, if it was not intended for the permanent use of all his people? I answer that the Lord said much which did not, and could not, apply to all" (p. 26). If the Brethren are satisfied with this reply, they are very simple and easily duped; but the truth is that this prayer is "plainly brought forward as an example or pattern of the prayer which was to prevail under the new economy."*

In *Help for Enquirers*, which, in its second edition, is the joint production of Drs. Davis and Wolston, in reply to certain "counsels" of "an Elder," it is remarked:—"This dear brother says we deny the truth about confession of sins. Some of the thousands of persons who have heard the preaching here during the last six months could have told that dear man otherwise, if he had taken the trouble to inquire." These are sweet words, but the reader soon finds that



they are most Jesuitical. We are apt to infer that Drs. Davis and Wolston approve of and practise confession of sins in public prayer; but two pages further on in the same book (p. 88) we read:—"Is confession of sins a thing for the public congregation? I admit that a public transgression may demand a public confession. But we are dealing here with *individual* sins—such, perhaps, as are known to God only; and, I ask you, is the public assembly the place for such a confession? It is not." Mr. Kelly mentions "entreaties for pardon" among things to be censured in public worship; but he thus *guards* his expression in a note:—"It is not denied that the child of God, failing in his daily walk, still needs to look to his Father for pardon as a question of government and communion, though already a believer, and having in Christ redemption through His blood, the remission of sins."* I suspect that many of the Brethren

But, whatever the Plymouthists may think, it is nevertheless true that every prayer, public or private, offered by sinful man, which has no petition for pardon, is essentially defective. The prayer of the Pharisee in our Lord's parable had no such petition, while that of the publican had nothing else; and the former was rejected, while the latter was accepted. As to the Lord's Prayer, Dr. Davis says:—"I leave every one perfectly free to use it or not to use it;" and Dr. Wolston agrees with him. Their opinion of the prayer appears to be more favourable than brother Kelly's, though they refer to his book with evident approbation. Their permission to use the prayer is altogether unnecessary after the Master had given it, for the disciple is not above his Lord; but it is strange to read their permission not to use it, in the face of the Master's words, "After this manner pray ye." If they think their words respectful towards the Great Teacher, they must have strange notions of propriety. It is safer to agree with the Westminster



which Christ taught His disciples, commonly called the Lord's Prayer." But the masters among the Scottish brethren with marvellous inconsistency withdraw their permission to use the Lord's Prayer almost as soon as they have given it; for they add, that those who habitually use this prayer "are doing unconscious disrespect to the will of God the Father, to the finished work of Christ, and to the present witness of the Holy Spirit."* The writers of such nonsense are sadly defective in common sense.

Having allowed some of acknowledged authority among the Brethren to speak for themselves on the subject of the confession of sin, I may refer to the testimony of one who was intimately associated with the Brethren, and thoroughly knew their views. The Rev. F. Whitfield, in a published *letter to the Rev. O. Dobree*, says, that the Brethren are of opinion that "to confess yourself a miserable sinner is to place yourself again under bondage. We have none to confess.

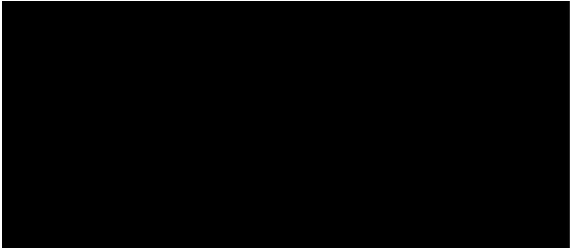


word? 'If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.' This is said of Christians—of those, all whose sins were put away by Christ. But the reference here is to our *daily* sins, and which again require to be confessed and to be forgiven. Nay, more, the forgiveness of these daily trespasses is made *dependent* on the confession of them. Mark the words, 'If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive.' How awful then to try to ignore this truth as the Plymouth Brethren do! What an awful state to arrive at, that we are not to confess our sins because in truth we have none! And let not Mr. Kelly say, this is not the case. It is the case. It is the notion deeply embedded in the minds and hearts of nearly all of them. Acts speak louder than words. It shows itself in all their prayers and supplications. You never hear (or rarely ever) confession of sin in one of them. I myself have heard hundreds of them pray, hundreds



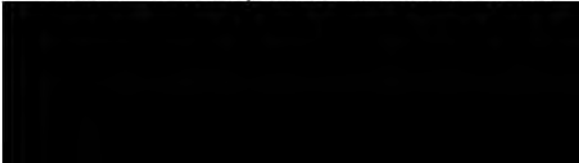
108 PRAYER FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

witness, whose Christian excellence is admired by all who know him, is of great importance. And we can sympathise with Mr. Whitfield when he sadly exclaims, "Oh, human heart of man, how will not the deceiver work upon thee to accomplish his purposes! How fearfully thou canst distort God's truth, and make the heart to believe it! God keep us all from the awful delusion into which many of these people have fallen, and which is now showing its effects in their bitter spirit, and their manifold divisions, and heresies." Mr. Whitfield is author of the well-known hymn on the *One Thing Needful*, which may be very offensive to a proud Plymouthist, but which is very precious to a humble child of God, deeply penitent on account of his many shortcomings and sins. I quote one of its stanzas:—

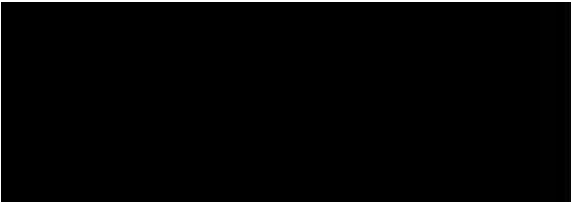


SECTION VIII.—THE PRESIDENCY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE Plymouthists hold that the Holy Spirit presides in their meetings, and that everything is done under His direction. That the Spirit of God is present in the midst of His Church is a truth implied in the precious promise given by the Church's Head. Jesus said to His disciples in His valedictory address:—"I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth." But nowhere is the Spirit said to preside in the meetings of the saints. The Brethren insist much on having Bible words for Bible things; but the presidency of the Holy Spirit is neither a Bible phrase, nor a Bible thing. Most of the Plymouth writers simply assert that it is a reality. Mr. Darby, whose word is law to all the Brethren of the prevailing section, says:—"If God is there, is He not to make His presence known? If He do, it is a manifestation of the



ple the individual is infallible for the time; and all the Brethren ought to be silent when he is impelled to speak. Mr. Groves foresaw the consequences of adopting this principle, when he thus forewarned the Brethren, in his letter to Mr. Darby, in 1836:—"Your government will become one wherein overwhelmingly is felt the authority of *men*. The position which this occupying the seat of judgment will place you in, will be this: the most narrow-minded and bigoted will rule because his conscience cannot and will not give way, and therefore the more enlarged heart must yield." It is evident from this extract that the founder of the sect did not believe in the Plymouth doctrine of infallible presidency in the meetings of the Brethren. Like many other doctrines now held by them, this has been imported in their progress of error. Of this progress Mr. Spurgeon says strongly:—"I should have been surprised if I did not feel myself pre-



to-morrow, for they seem to be given up to the invocations of their own vain-glorious minds, to concoct and devise delusions without number."

If it is true that the Spirit of God presides in the Plymouth meetings, we may surely expect order and propriety of choice in all of them. But the contrary is the fact to a deplorable extent. This is freely confessed by Mr. C. H. Mackintosh, one of their chief men, when he says:—"Alas! alas! we have often seen men on their feet, in the midst of our assemblies, whom common sense, to say nothing of spirituality, would keep in their seats. We have often sat and gazed in astonishment at some whom we have heard attempting to minister in the assembly. We have often thought that the assembly has been looked upon by a certain class of ignorant men, fond of hearing themselves talk, as a sphere in which they might easily figure without the pains of school and college work."* Instead of being better regulated, they seem to be much more disorderly than other meetings



ledged. If the Holy Spirit were presiding, there would be no need of the apostolic exhortation, "Let all things be done decently and in order."

It is surprising that Mr. Mackintosh should contend for a form of government which confessedly allows such disorder as he describes, and our surprise is heightened when we examine the Scriptural foundation on which he builds it. The two expressions, "Here am I," and "God is author," are the ridiculously small foundation on which he rests the whole doctrine. The former is taken from Matthew xviii., 20, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." But nothing whatever is said of presidency here. It is the presence of Christ which is here promised in all the meetings of the saints, whether large or small—whether for public preaching or worship, for social prayer, or for Church government. The passage has special reference to social prayer, as



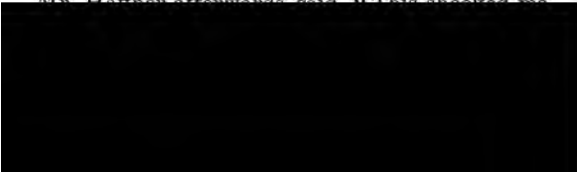
and it descends to two persons, the smallest number with whom social prayer is possible. But there is not the remotest allusion to the presidency of the Holy Spirit.

The other text on which Mr. Mackintosh tries to found his baseless doctrine is 1 Corinthians xiv., 33, "For God is not the author of confusion." On Mr. Mackintosh's own testimony, we must believe that the president, whoever he is, permits great confusion in the meetings of the Plymouth saints. By its being printed in italics the mere English reader sees that the word *author* is not found in this text as Paul wrote it. Alford translates, "God is not a God of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." This text then has absolutely nothing to do with the presidency of the Spirit; and the general bearing of the passage is entirely opposed to Mr. Mackintosh's doctrine. As the servants of God, the Corinthians were exhorted to be orderly, and not more than one was to speak at a time in



guide them; and to the directions in his Epistle Paul added the promise,—“The rest will I set in order when I come.”

It is amazing to see how strenuously the Darbyites adhere to the baseless and now exploded theory of the presidency of the Holy Spirit in all their meetings. They seem to be given up to “strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” The very disorder caused by a pretentious brother, who rises abruptly and disturbs the meeting, is vindicated by many. A quaint old man once said to Dr. Carson, “They must start up when the spirit jags them.” On the subject of preparation for the ministry, Mr. Newton, just before leaving Plymouth, said to Mr. Haffner, that before coming to the Lord’s table he did not see it at all wrong to be prepared with what he had to say to the saints. Mr. Haffner afterwards said, “This shocked me



of learning and culture like Mr Newton, in the midst of a well-prepared discourse, and that, too, with his own insane ravings, which he falsely ascribes to the Spirit of God! A clergyman who left the Plymouthists, in disgust, said :—" I thought the Brethren spoke by inspiration, till I heard them misquote Scripture." To say that the Holy Spirit vacillates, like weak and erring men, forgetting and misrepresenting, in Plymouth utterances, what he had himself previously said in Scripture, is downright blasphemy. The Plymouthist who can assert this is equal to anything in the way of error.

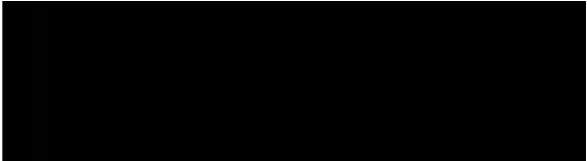
The reader is probably satisfied that the presidency of the Spirit, as held and taught by Plymouthists with most perverse tenacity, is both baseless and blasphemous ; but a few illustrations may be given from the writings of the Brethren in regard to the pernicious influence of the doctrine. Mr. Goodall refers to the manner in which the London Bridge meeting wrought :—
" On the one hand, superseding and suppressing



sumptuously represent the Holy Ghost as condemning in one meeting what He has confirmed in another. The same writer says, that the Woolwich Assembly, in 1861, "without waiting for a trial, and in the *absence of evidence*, on *ex parte* statements, pronounced Mr. Stewart to be excommunicated, thus practically denying the unity of the body, and the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church, to our common shame and humiliation." Dr. Currie of Jersey says:—"I believe the charges brought against Mr. Stewart *utterly false*, and that he made every effort to have an opportunity of proving them so." Mr. Stewart says, "that the whole of this shameful procedure was got up by a faction, fed and fostered into an exaggerated form by *dissimulation*, and for a well-understood purpose. No pen could describe how for fourteen years the poor saints of God have been worried and perplexed in Jersey. Is it come to this pass, Brother Darby, that injustice, banished from the



regret to state, *all sober investigation*. Every remonstrance is unheeded. Insinuations, slanders, insolence, threats, and violence are resorted to. I designate it an inquisition. The doors were guarded and locked. A brother, on applying for entrance, was seized by the throat, and thrust back." This brother * wrote a long letter to Dr. Carson, in which he says :—" I was seized by my throat, by Mr. ———, and nearly strangled, and I bore for several days the marks of this old gentleman's talons in my neck ; and yet this old gentleman is allowed still to teach. This account you will find recorded in Mr. Culverhouse's pamphlet, for he was there, and examined my neck. Several sisters rushed out in great fear and alarm. One said, ' It was like a menagerie of wild beasts.' I am extremely glad that I have been delivered from the worst sect that a Christian man can meet with under the canopy of heaven. They pretend to be wholly led by the Holy Spirit, whereas all things are arranged beforehand—who shall lecture, who



shall pray, who shall give out hymns." Such disorderly and violent proceedings occurring anywhere are much to be deplored ; but when they occur among the Brethren, they conclusively refute their pretence of having the presidency of the Holy Spirit. Nor were these meetings conducted by an inferior class of Brethren, if such an expression be permissible amid high claims of equality ; for, according to Mr. Culverhouse, " Our Brethren, Mr. Darby, Mr. Wigram, Dr. Cronin, and Mr. M'Lean are the chief and ruling members." These proceedings, attested by the Plymouthists, give us something to compare with the " plausible sanctimoniousness " of which Mr. Stewart speaks. John Foster refused to go to a Plymouth meeting, giving as his reason, " I never go to hear men that are inspired " ; and many, whose perspicacity is much inferior to that of the great essayist, will see through the thin veil of pretence behind which the Plymouthist contends that the order in all his meetings is the result of the immediate guidance and control of the presiding Spirit of God. The more we know of such order, or rather disorder, the claim on its behalf appears the more absurd.

SECTION IX.—THE CHURCH AND ITS OFFICE-BEARERS.

THE Plymouthists hold that the church consists of the whole body of believers in Christ ; and that the members of the church have no authority to choose ministers or other office-bearers. The practice of the Plymouth Societies is not uniform in regard to the pastoral office ; but the tendency of the system is to regard all the Brethren as entirely on a level. Some have a paid pastor who preaches and also visits the sick among them ; and there are leading preachers of great influence and authority, whose presence is always welcome in any of their societies ; and when such a preacher is present, it is seldom that any other brother is *moved* to address the meeting. In reference to the Christian ministry, Mr. Mackintosh says :—“ We hold it to be a Divine institution—its source, its power, its characteristics are all divine and heavenly. We believe that the great Head of the Church received in resurrection



Church. He imparts them as and to whom he will. We believe that, when he imparts a gift, the man who receives that gift is responsible to exercise the same, whether as an evangelist, a pastor, or a teacher, quite independently of all human authority."* It is gratifying to observe that Mr. Mackintosh acknowledges that the Christian ministry is a divine institution, and that the offices of evangelist and pastor are continued in the Church. He is right, too, in saying that the gifts bestowed on the Church are derived from Christ. But he is labouring under a confusion of ideas in supposing that, because the gift of office is conferred by Christ, it is therefore not communicated through the medium of the Church. It is surely better to accept the authority of the Church than the unsupported declaration of one whom common sense would keep in his seat—to use Mr. Mackintosh's own expressive phrase. Indeed, Mr. Mackintosh is obliged to own that the Church, or assembly, as he prefers to call it, is entitled to judge of the gifts, admitting or refusing the claims of those

* *Sabbath, Law, and Christian Ministry*, p. 13.

who say they possess them. "Wherever they really exist, it is the place of the assembly to recognise them with devout thankfulness. We can easily see where a man is divinely qualified for any department of the ministry. It is not if a man *say* he has a gift, but if he in reality has it. A man may say he has a gift on the same principle as he may say he has faith (James ii. 14), and it may only be, after all, an empty conceit of his own ill-adjusted mind, which a spiritual assembly could not recognise for a moment." I take the liberty of inviting the attention of the Brethren to these well-considered words of Mr. Mackintosh, as they are greatly needed. The Brethren object to all training for the ministry, and think that the Church has only to recognise the gift of teaching where they think it exists. But experience teaches us that those only who are trained for any service can perform it properly. It is well for the credit of Plymouthists that there are still educated and ordained ministers among them. When these die out, alas for the prospects of their ministry! It may be expected that there will come into prominence a "class of ignorant men,

fond of hearing themselves talk," who look upon the Church as "a sphere in which they might easily figure without the pains of school and college work." Mr. Mackintosh acknowledges that such men have often intruded themselves on the meetings of the church in his presence ; and, we naturally ask, what may be expected when he, Mr. Darby, and other educated men are no longer present? When a young man feels inclined to the Christian ministry, and thinks he has a divine call to it, he enters on the course of preparation required by the church. Whoever proposes to teach others, must himself receive a liberal education. Among other qualifications, he must be able to read the Scriptures in the language in which they were written by



clergymen have embraced Plymouthism, and other errors, while the Broad Church party can hardly be said to have definite doctrinal opinions at all. Presbyterian Churches have their Theological Halls, and every candidate is subjected to careful examination ere he is recognised as a probationer, or ordained as a pastor.

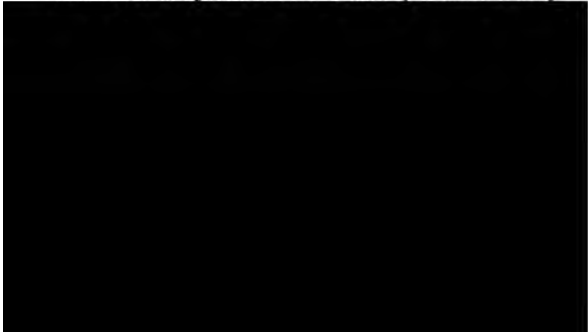
Mr. Mackintosh admits that "there were elders and deacons in the early Church. They were appointed by the apostles, or those whom the apostles deputed." He adds, "We believe that when Paul or Timothy, or Titus ordained elders, they did so acting by the power and under the direct authority of the Holy Ghost; but we deny that any man, or body of men can so act now."* He finds no place for the choice of the people. But Drs. Davis and Wolston admit that the Church *chose* the deacons, and the Apostles *appointed* them.† Mr. Mackintosh is a very poor interpreter of Scripture facts and principles. Other Plymouthists are still more defective than he, and their writings make it

* *Sabbath, Law, and Ministry*, pp. 16, 17.

† *Help for Enquirers*, p. 53.

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sufficiently manifest that they have received no training in sacred Hermeneutics. Of this we have furnished abundant evidence in the preceding pages. The New Testament does not contain a dry detail of rules for the regulation of the affairs of the Christian Church ; but facts are recorded as to what took place under apostolic authority in planting the Church, and principles are implied or stated which are sufficient for the guidance of the Church in all ages. Let me ask the attention of Plymouthists to the following. The earliest instruction for the choice of office-bearers in the Apostolic Church is thus recorded by the inspired historian:—"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may



who fail to perceive this. The principle thus laid down was no doubt followed in the election and ordination of both preaching and ruling elders: there is not the slightest evidence of any other plan being adopted. Titus, an ordained evangelist, was instructed by Paul to ordain elders in the Churches of Crete; and only an erring Plymouthist could suppose that he also chose the men. No doubt the Churches selected the elders, and Titus ordained them. Paul reminded Timothy that he was ordained "with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery" (1 Tim. iv. 14). Mr. Mackintosh admits that the apostles, and even the evangelists in apostolic times, ordained; but he denies that the Church is authorised to follow their example. On this absurd principle, the history of the Acts must have been written in vain, if the apostles have set no example for us to copy. But Paul approved of the ordination of a Presbytery, not prospectively, but as occurring in his own day. All this is so plain to candid minds, that the Plymouthists appear not to have the shadow of a foundation for their objection to the election and ordination of office-bearers.

Many Plymouthists object to the payment of Christian ministers; but the inspired apostle has expressly declared that the Lord has appointed that the Church should give temporal support to those who labour in spiritual things. His words are:—"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" And, again, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 11, 14). A Berwickshire ploughman, who is also a Plymouth preacher, has lately written to me denouncing all paid preachers as necessarily hirelings; but he misunderstands our Lord's reference to the hireling, where the contrast is not between paid and



it does not agree with their will. Most men shrink from the very idea of fighting against God ; but a Jesuitical Plymouthist finds some plausible method of pacifying his conscience even when he takes his own way rather than God's. "O my soul ! come not thou into their secret ; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united."

Drs. Davis and Wolston contend that as the Church is "the body of Christ," and therefore "one body," it is wrong to speak of different bodies of Christians and many Churches.* This distinction is favourable to the Plymouth system, but it is inconsistent with Scripture. The sacred writers use the term Church sometimes in a more limited, and at other times in a more comprehensive sense. Writing to the Church at Rome, the apostle Paul sent his salutation to his dear friends Priscilla and Aquila, and added, "Greet the Church that is in their house." To all the Churches of the great metropolis, viewed as one Church, the same apostle said, "The Churches of Christ salute you ;" and in the same chapter he refers to "all the Churches of the Gentiles "

* *Help for Enquirers*, p. 39.

(Romans xvi. 4, 5, 16). We read also of the Church at Antioch, "the Church of God at Corinth," the Churches of Galatia, Macedonia, and Asia. The united Church of all nations and ages is referred to when we read of "the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The Plymouthists virtually unchurch all the existing churches, on the ground that they are divided into many sects; but all they have done to cure the evil they deplore is the creation of a new sect, more sectarian than any of the others, and the bond of union is the Plymouth heresy. There is a strong tendency towards union among all the Churches at the present time; but there is not the slightest ground for supposing that the coming union will take place on the principles of Plymouthism. The more carefully these principles are examined, the more fully will their unscriptural character appear.

CONCLUSION.

THUS have I finished the task I had marked out for myself, having presented a somewhat comprehensive summary of the principles held by the Plymouth Brethren—a subject which would require a much larger volume for its full discussion. I have stated the views of the Brethren under each head, in the words of acknowledged leaders among them—the quotations being long enough for a full exhibition of the opinions of the respective authors. Nothing could be fairer than this, both to the individual authors and to the Brethren as a whole. I ask the reader to form his own judgment, after carefully considering the opinions cited, and the refutation appended. It is surely not too much to expect that some brethren who have been misled will find their way back to the paths of truth. I have found many of them very imperfectly



certain opinions which I ascribed to the Brethren. I have sometimes proved the points from books in their own possession. To such persons this book may be useful, and they will probably be surprised to find opinions from which they strongly dissent, stated in the words of writers with whose names they are familiar. Error cannot stand the light of truth—like darkness, it flies before the light. This book contains evidence that some excellent men and good writers have been led by various means to discover their error, and abandon the Plymouth ranks. But persons who have committed themselves find it difficult to undergo the humiliation of confessing their error. This book, therefore, is likely to be of most service if put into the hands

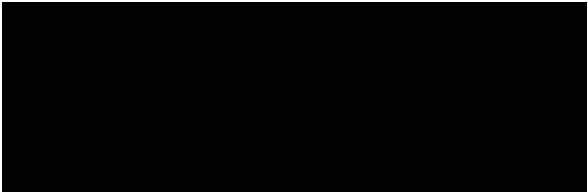
whom I highly esteem and love; but unquestionably there are tares among the wheat with them as with other denominations. They differ, however, from all other professing Christians in this, that they are like Ishmaelites in Israel—their hand being against every man, and every man's hand against them. They prosecute their proselytising work, sometimes with cunning secrecy, eagerly bent on seduction; while, at other times, they do it openly. If they have brotherly love among themselves, they have none for other denominations. In the most cruel and heartless manner they disturb the peace of churches, and endeavour to draw away the most pious and highly-esteemed members. I lately had occasion to witness one of their more open efforts at proselytising. On the evening of the Communion Sabbath, it fell to me to preach in one of the churches of Glasgow; and I was surprised to find that the narrow lane close by the church was occupied at its entrance by a man with a very small company around him. I heard a few of his words, which consisted chiefly of a furious vociferation of texts of Scripture. On inquiry I found that this was a Plymouth Brother, wishing

to draw away some of the people who were coming to the church, and induce them to go to a hall which the Brethren had opened a few months before in that lane. A Brother standing by the preacher was holding a pole, at the top of which the words were printed in large letters, "GOD IS LOVE." The incongruity was probably not observed by themselves, but it was seen by others. Whatever their profession, the language of their conduct was,— "God is love; but we are bitter sectaries, trying to vex this church and drawing away some of its members." I am fully aware that they found any silly sheep prone to wander. The Brethren profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus; but their spirit is diametrically opposed to His. While reading the first psalm, I distinctly heard the little company outside singing the hymn, "Hold the peace," which might be regarded as a warning against the determined assaults of these Ishmaelites. During prayer I again heard their singing, and was afterwards told that the second hymn was "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by," and the same words were heard on the opposite side of the church. If Jesus was there at all, He was

passing by—He could not *dwell* among such troublers of His Church. It was a good proof of their forbearance that the people did not complain of being disturbed at worship in their own church. Forbearance is lost on a decided Plymouthist ; but these impertinent intruders might have been told that there was room enough for their out-door preaching elsewhere, without bawling under the windows of a church filled with worshippers. Such unfriendly conduct was not fitted to recommend the Brethren, and I found on inquiry that not one member of this church had gone over to them since they opened their hall. On the following evening the hour of meeting was later, but they accommodated their time to ours, and we found the persistent offenders on the spot again as the people were assembling for their own service. They are convicted and confessed thieves indeed ; but at this time they were prosecuting their nefarious practices more in the way of open robbery than as common thieves. Their devices were transparent, and, therefore, they failed. “In vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.”

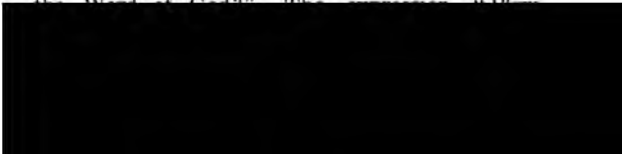
The Church at present needs to be reminded

of the apostolic exhortation—"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines." When precious truth is called in question, we are led to examine the grounds on which we hold it, and the result is likely to be a more firm and intelligent conviction of its truth. But let us beware of becoming indifferent to it, on the ground that it is opposed. We must "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

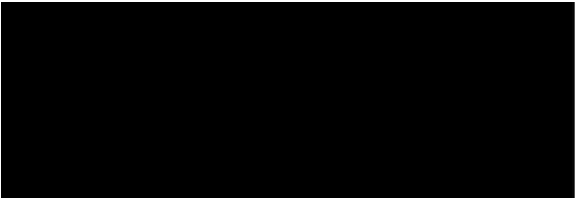


APPENDIX.

NOTE 1.—(*See Page 17*).—A Plymouth preacher in Berwickshire has favoured me with a long letter, in which he takes me to task for this allusion to Mr. Groves. He seems to think that I purposely concealed the fact that Mr. Groves was not ordained, though I have distinctly stated the fact. His words are:—"I wonder greatly at you knowing and telling so much about the Plym. Brethren, and still at the same time you keep to yourself the circumstances took place that Mr. Groves was not ordained. You may blind your congregations, and keep them asleep with your one-sided theology; but such theology will not do for those who know the words of the Good Shepherd from the voice of the hireling. Why not tell your congregation that ordination to preach the gospel is a falsehood—a human invention—direct from the papal chair, and nowhere to be found in the Word of God?" The expression "(Plym."



I question whether this Plymouth preacher himself knows the circumstances that prevented Mr. Groves being ordained at the time when he very much wished to be; and it is probable that he would not ask me to tell them now if he himself knew them. I could easily have told them before, if I had thought it of any importance for the reader to know them. They are fully related in his biography by his widow. He had fully made up his mind to go to Dublin for ordination; but, early on the morning of the day before that on which he was to leave home, thieves broke into his house and took away all the money he had laid up for the purpose. He blamed the thieves; but thought the hindrance from the Lord, who seemed to wish him not to be ordained. To quote his own words—"Some thought it right; others thought it foolish; it mattered not to us—we had not a doubt it was of the Lord. Yet, after my connection with college had been thus broken off—for I was to have taken my degree the following Easter, and I was unable, subsequently, to enter the Church at all, from not being able to subscribe the Articles, or rather that one relative to war—I was still so far



mind was then in great straits; for I saw not yet my liberty of ministry to be from Christ alone, and felt some ordination to be necessary, but hated the thought of being made a sectarian. But one day the thought was brought to my mind, that ordination of any kind to preach the gospel is no requirement of Scripture." (*Memoir*, p. 33.) This extract is not creditable to Mr. Groves. He ought to have interpreted providence by Scripture; but he appears to have interpreted Scripture by providence. This gives great room for foolish impressions, which some allow to over-ride the plainest declarations of Scripture. The Berwickshire ploughman proceeds to unfold my motives with as much confidence as if he were inspired; but he only exposes his own folly. He thinks I had a vile purpose in concealing the fact that Mr. Groves was not ordained, whereas, its bearing on the point in hand was of no consequence whatever. If the ploughman has read the section on *the Church and its Office-bearers* in the preceding pages, he will find a good reason why I have not told my people that ordination is "nowhere to be found in the Word of God." To tell them this would be to tell them a lie. He declares that I have been moved to write against the Plymouthists because they have carried off some of my members; but, as he lives in the neighbourhood, he ought to know that they have not taken away so much as

one. Even if they had, it would be no vile motive which would induce me to attempt to recover a wandering sheep. He had better avoid in future the imputation of motives.

While this book was passing through the press, Mr. Darby has issued a new edition of *The Sufferings of Christ*; but I find, on examining it, that while he modifies a few expressions, he adheres to his theory. He says, "Admitting the imperfections of poor human nature in my expressions, and immaturity too (of course I had not scanned and weighed it all as I have since these attacks); I hold completely and fully the doctrine which it was my object to teach in these papers." He does not lament his own errors and blundering—which have alienated some of his friends from him; but, in his usual self-complacent style, he says, "I mourn that I have been deceiving those I love." He

of Satan's

favour of his opinion that the Sabbath is a mere Jewish institution, not binding on Christians; and he requested me to prepare one in favour of the permanent obligation of the Sabbath. The articles appeared in successive numbers of the *Journal*, and the editor stated in a note that both were in his hands ere the former was published. The articles were independent of each other; but I was able to reply to the arguments of Professor Powell, as previously given in *Kitto's Cyclopædia*. Every thing advanced by Mr. Mackintosh against the orthodox view is refuted by anticipation in this paper. Professor Powell admitted that a strict interpretation of the words of Scripture was unfavourable to his views of the Sabbath. In a subsequent article he made the following admission:—"If the *literalist* principle be granted even in its more modified form, those opinions with regard to the law and the Sabbath will no doubt follow as direct consequences. At present my object is to recall attention solely to the *broad principles* on which any inquiries must be conducted; and this more particularly from the appearance in the last number of this *Journal* of an article 'On the Christian Sabbath,' by the Rev. P. Mearns, in which that divine has with much zeal, diligence, and eloquence, reproduced and enforced all the standard arguments (including, I believe, all

that can be urged) on the side of the question he has espoused. Though we have each touched on nearly all the same topics, and though we each take for the most part totally opposite views of each point from the facts of the case just mentioned, we both stand relieved from the otherwise unpleasant appearance of assuming an attitude of hostility." Mr. Mackintosh and the Plymouthists would disown the Oxford Professor's rationalistic principles of interpretation; but it is surprising how much they agree regarding the law of the Sabbath. The tendency of Plymouthism is to destroy the obligation of the weekly rest. Take away the Sabbath, and you will leave little religion in the land, either in profession or reality. But the argument in favour of the permanent obligation of the day of rest has always received an accession of power from the assaults of its opponents. Dr. Norman Macleod of Glasgow, a few years ago, made a furious assault on the Scripture argument; but the replies of the Rev. George Macaulay, then of Glasgow, and others, set it in a clearer and more forcible light than ever; so that much good came out of apparent evil. Truth summons her warmest friends to the contest.



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